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Author: Rosie Hughes Dept: Geography

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PERFORMING THE RURAL: PRACTICING RURAL SPACE THROUGH CARS

Rosie J. Hughes
PhD Thesis

The University of Sheffield
Department of Geography

June 2014

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PREFACE

Throughout the inception, undertaking, presenting, analysing, conceptualising and composing of this thesis I have received invaluable support and guidance from two supervisors, Dr. Matt Watson and Professor Peter Jackson. I will be forever thankful for their direction of my endeavour and their encouragement to push at theoretical boundaries.

I am ever-appreciative of the Economic and Social Research Council sponsorship (Award Number: ES/G 015236), and the additional Overseas Institution Visit funding since that provided the opportunity to collaborate with Professor Gordon Waitt, to whom I am also immensely grateful. Acknowledgement of The University of Sheffield Learned Societies Fund is also imperative, since the research has benefited from many conference presentations I have been able to attend through this supportive funding. By extension, therefore, I would also like to thank the audiences that have engaged with my work to date and provided critical but constructive feedback.

To those who welcomed me into their homes, and their cars, I am indebted to these individuals that participated in this research. I would like to take the opportunity to thank them for their time to talk about their cars and their engagement with the countryside.

Lastly, to Gareth Hughes, thank you for living this journey alongside me.

ABSTRACT

The British notion of ‘rural’ concerns this thesis. How is it produced? How does it endure? What geographical scale does it manifest at? What do (re)productions of rural entail in practice? Beginning with the recognition that British rurality is both discursive and geographically locatable (Cloke, 2000), but, in practice, these notions are not mutually exclusive (Halfacree, 2006), the thesis seeks to fundamentally re-theorise how rural (space) is (re)produced. *Realising the Research* opens the thesis, establishing that the car offers a complex material lens through which the empirical research can ensue. Then, *Read/Reworked* comprehensively layers several theoretical influences to developing Halfacree’s (2006) triad for rural space. The theoretical foundation for the thesis positions the phenomenological body as the pivotal framing for subjective engagements with rural space, drawing on Merleau-Ponty (1958) and Ingold’s (1993; 2001) notion of ‘taskscape’, but also utilising Schatzkian (1996; 2001; 2002) Practice Theory to unpack how subjective performances can manifest through driving (and other) practices. Following the theoretical framing, *Rudiments and Routines* illustrates how the research was methodologically conducted. The thesis’ empirical discussion is presented in four chapters: *Road* demonstrates the import road spaces have in shaping rural engagement; *Rhythm* asserts that temporality is pivotal in the production of rural space through driving practices; *Re/View* tackles the visual primacy of dominant discourses of rurality by emphasising the embodied rendering of seeing that manifests in practice; but, *Ride* focuses wholly on drawing out the embodied negotiation of car and countryside in practice, offering in-depth insight into how rural space nuances performances in practice. Each of the empirical chapters illuminates how subjective rural spaces endure through discursive, material and embodied relationality. Thus, in the final chapter, *Rural*, the presentation of the thesis triad is the culmination of the thesis, where rural space is positioned as (re)produced through social practices.

• 1 •

REALISING THE RESEARCH

1.1 Locating the Road to Rural Space

“Rurality is idyllic, we are told. You can’t get away from it. The long fingers of idyll reach into our everyday lives via the cultural paraphernalia of video, television, art, books, magazines, toys and traditional practices. ... Almost without realising, it seems, we learn to live out these knowledges in perception, attitude and practice” (Clope, 2003: 1).

“A village cricket team, twelve horses, ten chickens, seventy sheep, a model of Glastonbury Tor, two mosh pits and the largest harmonically tuned bell in the world are among the sights that will greet the world when the curtain comes up on the London Olympics” (Guardian, 2012).

Rurality is held with much affection and nostalgia in British culture. Its embeddedness in everyday lives is captured in Cloke’s rendering of the idyllic rural, since rurality is understood as entrenched in myriad material, emotive and social practices. And over the course of this research, the cultural affection for rurality has never been more publically obvious than in one of Britain’s seminal moments of the twenty-first century thus far; the opening ceremony of the London 2012 Olympic Games. Conceived, creatively directed and artistically choreographed by Danny Boyle, the initial representation of the country(side) was a pastiche of its rural heritage. The nostalgic representations quoted above opened the Guardian article summarising what was to be reproduced in the ceremony as Great Britain’s presentation of self; of all the cultural motifs integrated into the performance, the idyllic rurality referents lead the copy. The ‘living out’ of idyllic ruralities that Cloke describes, was done on such a grandiose scale through the ceremony performance; illustrating to the world how British culture is invested in a idealised rendering of the country(side).

Yet the story told in the Olympics opening ceremony was of an industrial tidal wave that metallised the green aesthetic, such that the rural was lost. Such performance captures the national sentiment: a position rural scholars have long been emphasising, whereby dominant discourses of rurality perpetually (re)produce rural as a space of pastiche, pastoralism and patriarchal relations (see, Cloke and Little *et al*, 1997; Murdoch *et al*, 2003). That rural was represented as being at risk from urbanisation was performatively reproducing rural space through dominant discourses that perpetuate British rurality as idyllic imaginary though fragile in its manifestation. Moreover, the symbolic production of the ceremony serves to framing what is at stake for the thesis.

By focusing critical attention on the way rural performatively manifests, within the ceremony, but also thinking more broadly about everyday enactments of daily life, the thesis begins with recognition of rural as being discursively (re)produced. However the complexity in rural's production emerges when taking into account that rural is simultaneously a geographical referent: rural is both locatable and discursive (see, Cloke, 2000; 2003; 2006). But rural discourse does not necessarily equate with such nostalgic renderings of rurality (see, Cloke and Little, 1997). Thus, the thesis immediately identifies the foundational tension (still) facing rural studies: reconciling how rurality is simultaneously imaginative and material, while both renderings perpetuate different realities of rural space. Moreover, as Boyle's menagerie of animals and nostalgia conveyed, the relevance of understanding the British idyllisation of rurality has never been given more cultural prominence than the stage it was reproduced on at the London Olympics. How the 'perception, attitude and practice' (Cloke, 2003: 1) of idyllic discourses enduringly manifest is as imperative to understand today as it was several decades ago, when the notion of rurality was being critically developed (see, Cloke, 2006).

The risk in not critically reflecting on (re)productions of idyllic ruralities, such as those produced in the ceremony, is apathy on rural space's existence cultivates. Acceptance that rurality endures as a discourse and a geographical space would fail to fully engage the social, situated dimensions through which rurality is being articulated. The risk is that materially rural spaces would suffer, in some way, due to dominant discourses that reproduce it as (enduringly) idyllic. But fundamentally, 'rurality is not homogenous' (Cloke, 2003: 2). Not all ruralities are composed of the quintessential rolling greenery, stone cottages, village greens and tendered livestock that Boyle's ceremony vision pedalled. Furthermore, Cloke also provides insight to what is at stake:

'Knowing the rural through idyllic representations, then, not only hides social problems such as poverty and homelessness, but also establishes a political and cultural expectation of orthodoxy which activity seeks to purify rural space from transgressive presences and practices' (Cloke, 2003: 3).

Thus, finding a way to work with the enduring discourses of rurality, whilst recognising the importance of local, geographical nuances to knowing rurality necessitates thinking beyond discourse (Cloke, 2003). For Halfacree (2006: 47), seeking to further understand how rural space is (re)produced needs to be attentive to how 'the material and ideational rural spaces ... intersect in practice'. It is on this basis, that the thesis finds critical purchase to pursue research engaging with how rurality is perpetuated in practice.

But to understand the complexity of rurality that the thesis engages, however, necessitates unravelling the notion of 'rural' discourses, before conceptualising how they might connect with geographically rural locales. The genesis of British rurality discourses

can be traced back at least to the nineteenth century. Aitchison *et al* (2000: 70) note how the cultural heritage of valuing the British countryside stems from the Romantic period:

‘the Romantic movement’s affinity with Nature in the round stimulated a full-hearted appreciation of rural landscapes by those who had acquired the necessary cultural capital. Second, a belief in ‘rational leisure’ encouraged recreation in the countryside not only to develop a healthier physique but also to refresh and improve the mind and rejuvenate and inspire the spirit in beautiful surroundings. Both notions emphasise the sanctity of the countryside, contrasted with the unwholesome features of urban life’ (Aitchison *et al*, 2000: 70).

Notably, what Aitchison *et al* highlight is how cultural relationality to the countryside was historically embedded through ‘leisure’ and ‘value’, borne out of Romanticism. There is, however a well-rehearsed literature that deals with the notion of rural critically (see, Cloke and Thrift, 1994; Cloke and Little, 1997; Cloke 2003; Cloke *et al*, 2006; Halfacree, 1993; 1994; 1995; 2003; 2006; Murdoch *et al*, 2003). These authors collectively emphasise the importance of thinking rural space as a more complex notion than ‘leisure’ and ‘value’ offer.

However, understanding the historical genesis of normative relations to rural spaces provides a context through which to unpack how rural discourses have evolved to how they manifest today. Matless (1995) noted that, in the early-twentieth century, the British desire to engage with the countryside, in the form of rurality, connected with a moral geography of the citizen. To engage with the countryside was to enhance an embodied imaginary of self, since rural space was seen as the site for self-fulfilment (*ibid.*). Unpacking the material resonances in the evolution of rural discourse presents empirical opportunity for the thesis too.

Thus the thesis argues for that *material opportunity* to be realised through the use of the car. Arguably, the car is a ubiquitous materiality of modernity, and a materiality that straddles both high and low culture (Wollen and Kerr, 2002). The car presents opportunity to think through mobile interactions with rurality, and opens up conceptual and empirical space to grapple with where rural discourse is negotiated within such engagements. Moreover, in recent years cars have received renewed attention as materialities embedded in social lives (see, Hannam *et al*, 2000; Latham and McCormack, 2004; Laurier *et al*, 2008; Sheller, 2004; Urry, 2000; 2006; 2007).

Moreover, Matless’ (1995) work illustrates linkages between rural engagement and emergent car cultures, recognising how car use became embedded in enabling and perpetuating engagements with rurality (*ibid.*). Matless contends that in engaging with the countryside, a vein of ‘preservationism’ was culturally perpetuated in the face of emerging (auto)mobilities that enabled wider access to rural spaces:

‘as car ownership extended into the middle classes, and bus travel and communal charabanc trips were offered for the urban working class, the

rural spaces of urban leisure were transformed. The railway, focusing on passengers into the orbit of a station, still played a key role, but, as rambling activist and preservationist Cyril Joad put it, the 'motor's capacity for ubiquitous penetration' had 'created a new situation' (Joad, 1934: 97, *cited in* Matless, 1995: 94)

In the car creating and democratising access to the rural space, the way rurality discursively accommodated the car was with a notable cultural shift. Joad's concern captures such 'preservationism'; an attitude that has subsequently become embedded in discursively produced rural spaces. Yet, Matless' work demonstrates how cars were foundational to democratising the regular use of rural spaces in Great Britain. This is an important context to establish, as it sits against the shifting sense over the twentieth century for what rural space offers as leisure space; notably developing from production to consumption space (see, Marsden *et al*, 1993). In short, the work that unravels the historical relationality of rurality demonstrates how attitudes and values have progressed, with a complex positioning of the car.

Initially, it is vital to specify the aims and objectives to establish what the goal for the thesis is and how it is to be achieved. Principally, the thesis aims to re-theorise how engagements with rurality manifest in situated practice. Stemming from this, the thesis has several objectives that specifically define how it shall fulfil this primary aim. Objectives are:

- contributing to the rural studies literature through developing an original conceptual framework for theorising the rural;
- empirically exploring Schatzkian Theories of Practice (Schatzki, 1996; 2002) enmeshed with Merleau-Pontean (1958) phenomenological theorisations of the body in the context of rural engagement; and,
- opening up critical space to illustrate the purchase of exploring automobilities in a rural context such that the empirical findings can expand the scope of both the automobilities literature and future rural research.

A further aim for the thesis is to demonstrate the expediency of methodological approaches that adopt innovative, technology-driven methods. Thus, the thesis also has the objective to explore the use of video methods within the qualitative methodological framework.

So this thesis is concerned to unpack how rural discourses manifest, drawing out the interrelation and cultural complexity that cars have within rural (re)productions. How the thesis achieves this is through a theoretical underpinning that is established in the introduction, but developed through the thesis. The quotes that open the thesis exhibit the interplay between the literature that informs the research, and the cultural context through which a concern for rural space is borne. In the discussion that ensues, the London 2012 Olympics Opening Ceremony serves as cultural rationale for the relevance that continued critical (dis)entangling of the rural has as a contribution. Herein this chapter takes up the

concern noted above for the embeddedness of the car within the cultural progression of engagements with rural space and its discursive rendering. Following this, the discussion then attends to where the research locates rural space to explore the questions it illuminates in this thesis introduction. Then, an overview of the subsequent thesis chapters is provided, before consolidating this opening journey with signposting to the overall conclusions the thesis makes.

1.2 Establishing the Car's Role in Engaging with Rurality

Visits, tours and trips to the British countryside, as well as living within, are an important part of social and cultural life in the United Kingdom within which the car often plays a vital role, even though culturally contested at times. Since the early decades of the twentieth century, cars have been proliferating in ownership (for a summary of the car's history see, Wollen and Kerr, 2002). Within that proliferation, the role of the private car in producing rural spaces has equally evolved, along with a culturally normative performance of engaging with rural space, often via the 'Sunday drive'. The notion of 'Sunday drive' is entrenched in popular imaginaries of rural car usage: reinforced historically by such twentieth century publications as *The Shell Guides* (see, Hadfield, 1970) that fastidiously detail the geographic and historical characteristics of its selected destinations across the British landscape, encouraging drivers to seek out new places. Shell also produced guides for how to engage with that landscape too (see, Muir, 1981), thus reinforcing rurality as an external entity to be visually consumed, facilitated by the car.

More latterly, the Sunday drive notion has been replicated in mediated productions of rurality in title sequences to such productions as the *Antiques Roadshow* and *All Creatures Great and Small*. The Sunday drive notion, however, is itself a relic of an era when car travel was not the ubiquitous everyday societal norm for the family, rather the reserve of weekend time for those who were wealthy enough to own a car. As can be seen from Figures 1.1 and 1.2, the shift over time in representations of the car's relation to rural space, and indeed the impact of post-World War Two Fordist production through until the late seventies (see, Mansvelt, 2005), is notable in the contrast these figures depict. From being a pastime initially only available to the elite wealthy enough to own a car, through to cars being available to the masses, financial availability of car ownership was arguably a defining factor in developing the social and cultural practice of driving to the countryside, as seen in Figure 1.2.

Still, cars embody a problematic relationship with rural areas, arguably resonating from protectionist ideologies that (re)produce the car as exterior from idyllic rural space. Arguably this is exemplified in National Park policies, where the focus is overwhelmingly on controlling their environmental and aesthetic impact. Cars are conceptualised as

unnatural, polluting, noisy, externalities within popular representations of the British countryside. Moreover, this serves in stark contrast to the national park concept established in North America, which widely advocates car use as a means of engaging with the park space. The Peak District National Park Management Plan (2006-2001) illustrates the (British rural) tension in action:

‘Eighty-five per cent of visitors come by car and most people would regard this not only as their favoured option but their only option even where alternatives do exist. It is our intention to work with partners to find and market alternatives to the car wherever practical’ (PDNP, 2005: 26).

Thus tension emerges between how the car provides a means to access rural space, how it shapes the way rural space is engaged with, and how it contributes to others’ experience of rural space too. But, on a more mundane level, it is recognised how the private car is *the* predominant way that residents, tourists, leisure visitors, commuters and workers traverse the countryside to engage with the space.

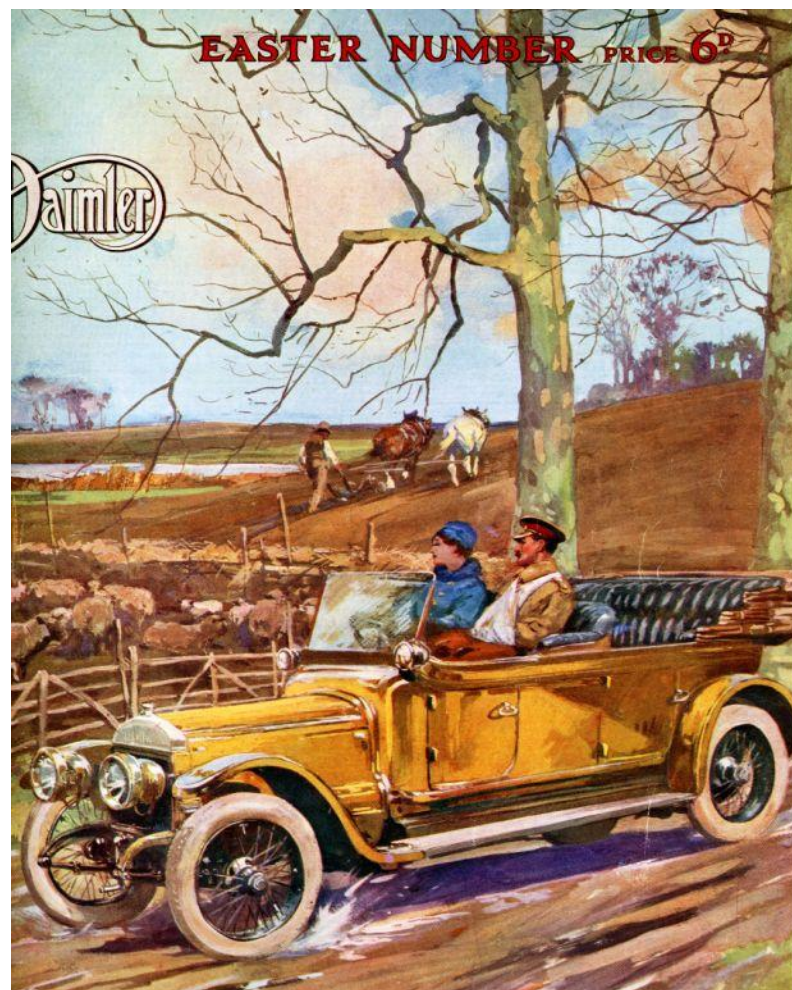


Figure 1.1: 1912 (Museum of English Rural Life, 2011a)



Figure 1.2: 1960s (*Museum of English Rural Life, 2011b*)

Yet, the car is in some ways celebrated as a means to experience the ‘rural’ road. The Shell representations position other users as absent from roads (see, *Figure 1.3*); implying empty rural roads for car exploration.



Figure 1.3: *Shell Guide to the Roads of Britain, 1965* (*Museum of English Rural Life, 2011c*)

Popular programmes depict the relationship one can experience with the car on empty, undulating, curvaceous or Romanesque straight rural roads. As Horton's (2008a; 2008b) work exploring notions of rurality in *Postman Pat* (the children's television programme) highlights, representations of vehicle use should not be overlooked as a (re)production of rurality endemic in the everyday. Similarly, Mordue's (1999; 2009) work on *Heartbeat* illustrates the importance that (re)productions of rurality have in cultural and social understandings of spaces. So by the same extension, other examples that incorporate the car within that rendering of rurality are worthy of highlight. *Top Gear*, for example, popularises the notion of driving through rural spaces as experiential, exhilarating and performances with machismo. On the other hand, the titles of the *Antiques Roadshow* position rurality as a challenge to overcome for the love of valuing one's antiques. What is apparent from thinking across these examples, which are by no means exhaustive of the media that reinforces rurality as space to experience, is how ubiquitous the commodification of the rural aesthetic is in everyday life (see, Cloke, 1994). Moreover, the rural emerges as commodified far beyond the spaces that might be defined as rural *per se* (see, Horton, 2008b).

Thus what emerges is a cultural genesis of rural that is intricately interwoven with social, cultural, industrial and mechanistic development over the past two centuries. Consequently, in paying attention to the rural, an awareness of its cultural heritage is pivotal in order to situate the questions that emerge initially and the findings latterly discussed. However, this discussion attends only to the very superficial level of unravelling notions of rural. Further exploration of the rural notion, in context of the geographical area the research engages with, is essential next to locate the research.

1.3 Locating the Research

That the rural landscape is a notion both geographically and culturally maintained serves as a pivotal axis that is balanced throughout the thesis. To that purpose, it is important to establish the research area in terms of its credentials as rural *per se*. Geographically, the research presented in this thesis was based in the Peak District National Park area and, more broadly, the non-urban areas of Derbyshire (see *Figure 1.4*). Using this area as the basis for research emerged from a pragmatic approach to defining feasibility of the field in terms of enabling data collection, but also from recognising that the area can largely be characterised as rural, to a greater or lesser extent. Since this term is as yet undefined, initially below I explore how the research area can be conceived as geographically rural and highlight the potential pitfalls in definition. I then also holistically consider the national park context and how that influences the defining of the research area as rural space, socially, culturally, politically and economically. However, before I detail the geographically specific context to the research, I take a few moments to reflexively explore the positionality I have to the



Figure 1.4: *Research Area:*
The Peak District National Park and Derbyshire, UK (Google, 2014a).

research site, to demarcate my ‘ownership’ and definition of the space and attempt to ‘de-centre’ it – as Cook *et al* (2005) suggest – whilst recognising that fully articulating my position is a difficult endeavour to fulfil (Rose, 1997).

Firstly, the research area is already familiar to me through multiple guises of engagement: as both a resident in the vicinity; an occasional tourist visiting somewhere; a commuter travelling through to work; and, also as a researcher (see, Emeny, 2008; 2009). Thus in the first instance, I have been frequenting this area since I was too young to remember, subjectively understanding this space as countryside and thus rural. The borders for me around the PDNP are porous in terms of the defining space as rural, such that rurality exists before the borders are traversed. By extension, given this is my experience; I anticipate others may understand the rural areas of Derbyshire and the PDNP as similarly rural in practice. In being resident within the research area adopted this means the area in question is familiar to me as a driver too. To understand the geographies that exist across the research area is useful both in terms of navigating and conducting the research: familiarity with the geographical locale means I can know largely where I am conducting the research,

whilst lubricating the conversation with people about their performances there. Yet my definition that this is geographically rural space is not robust enough alone to warrant siting the research here.

Thus, in order to establish this area as the research area, I turned to the Commission for Rural Communities' definition of rural. Their key facts publication entitled 'What is Rural?' reminds that the rurality we define in England is geographically and culturally esoteric:

“It is worth noting that England has an average population density of 382 people per square kilometre. In the context of the European Union countries, this would place England as having the third highest overall population density, behind the Netherlands and Malta. Hence, when we are defining and analysing English rural areas, we do so in a context that is predominantly urban” (Commission for Rural Communities, 2007: 2).

Consequently, it is with some irony that they then appropriate a population density measure. Still, when the report applies the definition proposed in DEFRA's 'The Rural Strategy' they rely on the three-step process the method adopts, using population density, sparse and less sparse than Census output areas to produce The Rural and Urban Classification (DEFRA, 2004 *cited from* Commission for Rural Communities, 2007: 3). The outcome is that each unitary authority is given a classification: the areas falling within the area the research is interested in all fall within the 'significant rural', 'rural-50' or 'rural-80' category. Although on one level, and mindful of a need for a yardstick to work from, this definition validates the use of the research area as a space which could be, and is in this case, defined as rural, but I recognise that such definitions are inherently problematic. This relies on population density first and foremost, and the key critical reflection from the quote above is that, despite England being a statistically densely populated country, rural spaces exist and endure in popular consciousness against this contextual backdrop.

So in utilising the Peak District, this serves as another way to underline how the research area could be conceived as rural space *per se*. A legal framework enshrines the protection of the Peak District area in law, from its creation in 1954 as the first national park in Britain, through the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 that still stands today (see, for discussion, Parker and Ravenscroft, 1999). However, reliance on using a national park as a signifier of space needs to recognise that the national parks are not inherently natural, rather are produced spaces in and of themselves (Katz and Kirby, 1991). Moreover, in being a national park, this does not automatically conflate with being rural space.

But, to just use the Peak District as a research area would be to deny the import of its rural periphery. The Peak District boundary is somewhat arbitrary in the locations I am familiar with crossing it. Take the millstone grit emblem in the verge, just north of Rowsely,

on the road into the Chatsworth estate: the sign demarcates the Peak District National Park sits amongst a landscape that doesn't change where the boundary falls. The sensation and realisation of being physically in rural space can emerge far earlier than crossing the Peak park sign. Still, that is my definition of rural space, and as I later develop in the thesis' next chapter, rurality can be more subjectively understood.

However, in being recognised as a national park, the Peak District is a draw for countryside engagement to the space within and surrounding it. The varied physical landscape offers different opportunities for engagement across the area. The southern region, the 'White Peak', is defined by the limestone bedrock that results in rolling hills, thick with green grassy pasture. In contrast, the northern area of the Peak District, the 'Dark Peak' has millstone grit as the bedrock, meaning the landscape is more severe, with steeper topography and uplands swathed in rich heather moorland. These physical variations translate in the driving spaces that the area offers too, from the topographies roads navigate across and around, to the scenery that is encountered from them. It is the natural uniqueness (or perceived naturalness, albeit agricultural, cultured and managed landscape in practice) that continues to draw visitors to the area.

But this is a landscape not just valued for its intrinsic topographies, flora and fauna. A vibrant cultural, social and political heritage animates the Peak District that can be understood as relevant to the enduring positioning of the park as rural space. In 1932, the area was the site of The Mass Tresspass on Kinder Scout (see, Matless, 1995; Urry and Larsen, 2011).

Furthermore, enduring interest in reproducing the space cinematographically serves to perpetuate the space as idyllically rural. The Peak District National Park authority advertise the numerous filming locations in the area as a key attraction to encourage visitors. The Chatsworth estate has been the scenic backdrop for a number of filmic productions, most recently the Hollywood blockbusters, *The Duchess* and *The Other Boleyn Girl* (see, Peak District National Park, 2014). In the vicinity, but not within the Park, is the village of Crich, formerly the home of the fictional Cardale village in the BBC drama 'Peak Practice', another notable filming location (*ibid.*). This latter example is a key case in point for the research exploring rural engagement across the Derbyshire and Peak District area, not bounded within it, since Cardale was portrayed as rural space.

Consequently, adopting the Peak District area and Derbyshire was an intuitive step to explore rural geographies and automobilities. But, as I note in the previous section, the Peak District (and surrounding area) sits uncomfortably with its relationship to the car. Much has changed from the earlier periods when cars would frequent the space, notably in volume of cars that can access, and this endures as a concern in Peak District literature:

‘The Peak District is one of the most easily accessible national parks in the UK. Its boundary is within an hour’s drive of around sixteen million people, a third of England’s population, and it received more than ten million visitors from England each year’ (PDNP, 2006: 1).

This provides a contextual backdrop for the questions the thesis develops that should be understood as complex, culturally specific and geographically situated within the unique spaces that the PDNP and surrounding areas encompass as ruralities. Whilst it is important to delineate the geographical and cultural situatedness of the research, and recognise these partialities in the knowledge produced through the thesis, there is broader opportunity to note. As a quintessentially rural locale, moreover, this research area provided the basis for a re-theorisation of how rural space manifests in practice too.

1.4 Looking Ahead

The chapters of this thesis develop the opening tenets explored here in the introduction, **Realising the Research**, through a framework that relies on key concepts to encapsulate the contribution from each chapter. As has unfolded above, the introduction to the thesis has served to substantiate how the research is broadly positioned, situated and influenced. A brief discussion of the Sunday drive notion is offered in order to situate the cultural normativity of using the car as a means to engage with rurality. The discussion has highlighted the key dimensions that inform the research agenda, and considered these in the context of popular consciousness, cultural norms and through reference to key grey literatures. This contextualisation is foundational to understanding the cultural, political, social and inherently geographic specificities that the research data production is inevitably entangled within. It has also been useful in opening the thesis to highlight the key dimensions of researcher positionality. By demonstrating the porosity of boundaries to the research area, this discussion of realising the research intentionally opens up the notion of rural ahead of the conceptual framework chapter that follows.

Thus, it is in the next chapter, entitled **Read/Reworked**, that the ambition for the thesis is conceptually developed. It is here that the literature informing the thesis’ theoretical foundation is explored and articulated into a conceptual framework for the thesis. The discussion begins with an outline, *Conceptualising the Rural*, to establish the seminal literatures that inform the position the thesis develops. From there, attention then turns to *Conceptually Expanding the Rural*, where the pivotal literature of Halfacree’s (2006) ‘three-fold architecture of rural space’ is examined and appraised. Through recognising the critical purchase to develop this notion, the chapter progresses by presenting phenomenological literature, in *Thinking through Phenomenology*, to introduce Ingold’s (1993; 2001) notion of ‘taskscape’. The next step the conceptual framework makes is to set the literature discussed

thus far into a broader framing provided by Schatzki's (1996; 2001; 2002) Practice Theory. Within this discussion, the framework addresses issues of materiality in practice, before the penultimate section, entitled *Theorising Cars and the Countryside*, provides conceptual context for the use of the material car. Throughout the conceptual framework discussion is focused on developing original readings of literature and exploring nuanced interfaces between the informing theoretical viewpoints adopted. The outcome is a summation that establishes the conceptual endeavour for the thesis overall; described in the final section, *Mobilising the Conceptual Framework*, that also gestures at the empirical import to be given attention in the following chapter.

From Read/Reworked, where I'm establishing the conceptual basis to the thesis, the methodological approach is subsequently captured in the **Rudiments and Routines** chapter. Broadly, the chapter falls into four key discussions. Initially this chapter (re)asserts the empirical challenge grounded in the reading of Schatzkian Theories of Practice. This serves as a basis to set out the methodological framework, within which each key dimension is then explored: *the fieldwork site* re-articulates the introduction's summation of the geographical area in the context of what it entailed empirically for the research; *Ethnographic Approach* details the working practices adopted in generating the research data; then respective discussions are structured around the key methods used. Focus Groups are explored and evaluated through discussion of the piloting process adopted. Then the chapter addresses the approach taken to using Interviewing methods. Finally, the section sets out the rationale and establishes the working approach to the Participant Video Making and Post-Videointerviews. In the third part of the chapter, attention turns to detailing how the Analytical Approach ensued. Within this section, the specifics are subdivided into highlighting the Data Administration challenges for the analysis (including consideration of the QSR NVivo8 software used), noting the approach for *Analysing Textual Data* to conduct thematic analysis, and finally describing the *Video Analysis* developed through the literature and undertaken in practice. The fourth, and penultimate, section of Rudiments and Routines offers critical *Reflections* on the approach adopted to generate the data in order to progress into the thesis with clarity on the challenges, issues and critical limitations to the empirical material gathered. Finally, the chapter concludes the contribution it makes to the thesis, and in doing so offers a brief outline looking forward into the substantive chapters.

Road is the first substantive chapter of the thesis, presenting an argument for the import of road spaces in (rural) automobilities. It begins with a reference to Odology from Mauch and Zeller (2008) that illustrates the potential for generating cultural understanding from analysis of roads. Thus, the chapter unfolds through an initial framing, entitled *Conceptualising Road*, which demarcates key literature, into two complimentary parts: *Unravelling Roads* and *Occupying Roads*. The former presents discussion through three

themes – *Surrounds*, *Surface* and *Shape* – to argue that roads are multidimensional in their composition that is readily negotiated in subjective performance. In the latter section, connections are drawn through the themes, with the facets of road performance presented as inherently interrelated in road spaces. Moreover, this section introduces a fourth dimension, that of *Sharing*, to illustrate the sociality that comprises the subjective performances in rural road spaces. In drawing the chapter to a conclusion, the final section, entitled *Making in/Roads*, asserts how established theoretical paradigms for driver-car relations need to be rendered through the space of the road. This conclusion serves as a foundational contribution that is then built upon through the thesis.

Rhythm explores time, temporality and the pattern of rural driving practice against a backdrop of developing understanding of rural driving *per se*. In opening this chapter, there is an account of performance given that illustrates how notions of time, ‘the moment’, are embedded in the everyday articulation of rural driving practice. To take shape, the chapter firstly establishes time as relevant to the theoretical foundation of the thesis, through the conceptual discussion entitled *Placing Time in the Frame*, and noting key authors including Shove (2009) and Edensor (2011). *Performative Rhythms* then presents the analysis through three emergent rhythmic themes: *Seasonal Rhythms* explores seasonality in subjective performance; *Weekly Rhythms* similarly considers everyday attitudes towards rural driving composed through weekly and daily rhythms that comprise it; and, finally *Aural Rhythms* examines the soundscape of rural driving in subjective performance. It then turns to unravel the *Rhythms of Rural*, contending that rural space is produced through the rhythmic themes identified earlier in the chapter. In concluding the chapter, the *Driving Rhythmic Discussion* consolidates the contribution the chapter makes to the thesis, suggesting that the performance of rural driving can be understood as inherently created through interwoven textures of temporality in situated practices. Rhythm provides the thesis with empirical reflection on how (re)productions of rural space are temporally animated in practice.

Re/View takes as its starting point the performance of seeing within driving practice in the context of producing rural landscapes. The leading section to the chapter, entitled *Seeing Rural Space*, presents the key performance of seeing through a landscape phenomenological framing. To expand on this, the chapter then offers discussion around the theme, Embodied Perspectives on Visuality, where key literatures on performative seeing are highlighted (Merleau-Ponty, 1958; Sobchack, 1992; Wylie, 2007). Within this chapter, an argument is presented for the entanglement of three key dimensions of performative seeing: visible, visual and envisioning. Briefly, visible is that which is seen in practice; visual is the way in which the field of vision is conceptually shaped through practice; and, envisioning is the enfolding of temporalities (through inciting imaginaries) into what could

be seen in practice. Thus, the discussion entitled, *Visible, Visual, Envision: Untangling what is Seen* expands on the three dimensions through sections that draw out the Inherent *Visibilities of Driving* and unpack how selectivity manifests in visualising in the rural drive. In untangling these three dimensions, the chapter illustrates how in practice they generate a paradox, whereby *Rurality Renders the Visible Visual*. In the final part of this section, the discussion turns to consider how *Envisioning in the Rural* emerges through analysis of situated performances that engage with rural space. Whilst this discussion divides the endeavour of Re/View(ing) into three dimensions, the latterly sections of the chapter focus on how visible, visual and envisioning collapse in practice. A case study is developed around Surprise View that demonstrates how seeing subjectively negotiates the visible, the visual and envisioning in situated practices. To consolidate the chapter, *In/sights* offers critical reflection on the contribution made, and concludes by emphasising the reification of rurality that manifests in participants' performances. In short, Re/View emphasises the import of engaging with the visual as an embodied performance in understanding engagements with rural space, but to recognise that such performances serve to reinforce discursive notions of rurality through practices too.

The penultimate chapter takes the metaphor of **Ride** as a concept utilised to pivot analytical discussion around. Ride begins by reminding that until that point, little in-depth analysis has been granted in the thesis to attend to the embodied dimensions of driving in rural space. As such, the chapter's framing of key concepts traces back to much of the foundational contributions found in Read/Rework, including Blackman and Venn's (2010) description of relationality. From reiterating the conceptual backdrop, analytical discussion falls into three broader themes. The first of these focuses on *Materially (Un)Packing the Car*, to demonstrate that what is understood as the material car is situated and produced, whilst also illustrating how, in practice, the body being materially negotiated is not always that of the driver. In the second part of the chapter's analytical discussion, entitled *Performatively Negotiating the Car*, attention is directed to unravelling how the body and car are subjectively understood in performances of driving. The discussion draws on subjective performances that are arranged across three performative dimensions; *Monitoring*, *Extension* and *Older Cars*. This section lays the groundwork for the final analytical discussion. Thus, in *Practising Rural Rides*, here reflections on embodied practices in relation to the production of rural space are discussed. Decisively, this penultimate discussion presents two dialectical renderings of rural space: rural as produced of and through driving engagement and, in distinction, driving engagement occurring within a rural space conceived as anterior to the body and car. Finally, through reflecting on the chapter, entitled *Ending the Ride*, the conclusion that rural space requires further ontological attention is an endeavour outlined for

the concluding and subsequent chapter. Consequently, Ride embellished the thesis with in-depth reflections on the engagement with rural space

Finally, **Rural** forms the conclusion to the thesis. Here each chapter's contribution to the broader thesis question regarding the subjective (re)production of rural space in practice are consolidated. Discussion develops through the chapter summaries into exploring the production of rural space. Conceptualising through Schatzki's (1996; 2001; 2002) Practice Theory, Ingold's (1993; 2001) notion of taskscape and Halfacree's (2006) three-fold triad of rural space, is found to be conceptual dynamite when empirically interwoven; the outcome being reflections of the production of rural space that further understanding of how subjective ruralities are inherently (re)produced through social practices. It is here where the thesis presents its own triad of rural space, detailing how each vertex manifests through practice to contend for a new way of conceptualising rurality as made through (re)performances embedded in social practices. Before drawing the thesis to a close, the chapter considers how the car as a material lens has shaped the research. Lastly, I offer a summation of the contribution being made, and emphasise the potential implications for having established that rural space is (re)produced through social practices.

1.5 Signposting the Destination

It is useful to have a map for where the thesis is going, in order that the journey to the conclusion is signposted. Below, therefore, I offer a forward-looking consolidation of this introduction chapter, in order to steer toward the thesis conclusion, contribution and consequence that are comprehensively communicated at the thesis close.

Over the course of the thesis, I work towards the presentation of a thesis triad, in *Rural*, the final chapter. Taking Halfacree's (2006) triad for rural space as foundational, the thesis triad is the outcome of theoretical and empirical development that begins in the Read/Reworked chapter and is accrued through the empirical analysis and discussion. The thesis triad is introduced at the concluding stage, as it serves to draw together the multi-dimensional discussions of rural space that ensue through the thesis. In order to develop my own version of a triad, the thesis re-theorises rural space as (re)produced through (the subjective performance of) social practices.

Thus, I nuance Halfacree's (2006) triad with Ingoldian (1993; 2001) phenomenology and Schatzkian (2001; 2002) Practice Theory. Informing the argument for the thesis triad is the import of the driver-car-road, which I develop in *Road*, from Dant's (2005) 'driver-car' concept. Moreover, an enduring focus on the bodily scale enables reflections that suggest discourses of rurality are reinforced through subjective performances. Furthermore, the visual primacy that is noted above as being overcome

through thinking through bodies, is contested, since the thesis finds that (re)producing rural space through driving practices produces an embodied visual primacy to engagement.

Therefore the thesis makes its primary contribution to pushing forward the theoretical literature on the production of rural space. By ensuring the implications for rurality are drawn out, the focus of the work demonstrates how my nuanced conceptual framework for rural space is empirically grounded. From a widely, but profoundly conceptualised, theoretical layering together of key concepts, the thesis fundamentally re-theorises how rural space manifests; establishing the importance of subjective, embodied renderings of rurality performed through practices.

But the thesis also makes several contributions to the automobilities literature. Firstly, by focusing on how people use their cars in practices of rural engagement, how cars are rendered through bodies emerges. Such findings are drawn out from the data by unpacking, literally, the materialities that drivers augment their cars with, for various practices of rural engagement. Secondly, the thesis carves out space for recognising the value for further research agendas that engage the car in non-urban contexts, since the conclusions enrich existing understandings of (auto)mobility. Notably, and to substantiate this claim, it is evident within the thesis how integral the mobilities literature is, as well as where the thesis appropriates and pushes notions forwards; thus making the contribution to the field.

Yet what also resonates through the work is the interplay between the conceptual and the empirical of rural space as (re)produced in practices. The key implication is how enduring the role of idyllic ruralities are in everyday encounters that (re)produce rural space. Linking back to the opening of this chapter, the key implication is for rural scholars to continue to work with, and through, dominant discourses of rurality, whereas Cloke (2003) would argue we need to go ‘beyond’, the thesis illustrates that however far we conceptually progress, the idyllic imaginary of British rural space will continue to haunt how rurality is socially (re)produced in practice.

Finally, I reconcile the thesis contribution to wider debates in the conclusion too, by noting the import for policy to recognise the car as a more-than-automobility engagement when individuals use it to (re)produce rural space. In this sense, the research matters because it enables empirical evidencing of car use in the British countryside that does not moralise or set out with a transformative agenda, but rather offers an in-depth characterisation of how cars are deeply embedded in everyday engagements with rural spaces. Moreover, the research (could) present an opportunity for pragmatic, progressive policy positioning of car use in (managed) rural spaces.

1.6 Notes on the Thesis' Composition

Before beginning each of the subsequent chapters, it is imperative to note key facets of the work in order that it be received as intended. This thesis is borne out of empirical material that includes video data (discussed initially in the Rudiments and Routines chapter).

Throughout the discussion, reference is made to extracts of video that accompany the text discussed here. For each of these extracts, within the text a placeholder of a freeze-frame is provided. These images are labelled as 'extracts' (as opposed to figures). Just as a figure would be read in the sequencing of the text, a similar approach to engaging with the video extracts is intended. In the accompanying DVD, the video extracts have file names in accordance with their position in the thesis; meaning extracts can then be individually selected. The intention is that these are viewed alongside engaging with the literary text, such that the thesis can be conceived as a product across these media. However, recognising that this might not always be feasible in the practice of reading the thesis, when video extracts are referenced, the imagery in the text provides an insight to connect with the discussion.

· 2 ·

READ / REWORKED

2.1. Reading Rural

Rural spaces in the UK have their own field of geographical and sociological enquiry to attend to the intricacies of their spatialities. Rural spaces, as noted in the opening chapter, have a myriad of cultural, social and political definitions that have accrued in the UK, but are loosely defined as areas with low population densities, in non-urban and non-suburban spaces. However, the definition of rural space *per se* is far more fluid and polymorphous than that initial explanation offers. Rural space is inherently constructed and produced, subjectively, institutionally, socially and culturally. Its comprehension should always be set against a critical contextualisation of the geographic, social, historic, economic, physical and cultural dimensions of the spaces being engaged with. That is because ‘rural’ is both construct and locale (see, Cloke, 2000; 2003b; 2006). It is from this basis that the thesis begins to cultivate a conceptual concern.

In developing this research I have *read* the academic literature across disciplinary boundaries and followed critical theories through their conceptual progression, carving out a research agenda along the way. The thesis’ genesis is rooted in unanswered questions from, and spaces between, the literatures that I detail below. In what follows I will explore where those questions and spaces exist in the current literature in order to highlight the boundaries that the research agenda ultimately aims to expand. The literature engaged with largely focuses on UK empirical examples, with a handful of exceptions, but I am acutely aware that in the preparation of this discussion there is an obvious lean towards first world, western geographies and theoretical viewpoints. I want to acknowledge this at the outset, and reflexively note upfront the partialities with which I approach these literatures that I am *reworking*. Thus I recognise the importance of being reflexive on the subject position I occupy within the construction of this framework – a point I return to evaluate in the concluding chapter of the thesis.

But here, in this chapter, I strive to push at the boundaries of several fields of social science theory to gain critical purchase on each, through the broader framework I piece together. Firstly I discuss the foundational literature sourced from rural studies, to situate where conceptual progression has reached for the concept of rural. This provides a starting point from which to progress the rural notion, following which I take forward Halfacree’s

(2006) triad framing of rural space as a comprehensive conceptual basis to develop. From cultivating how each of the triad's three dimensions can be critically reworked in the context of performance theory, the chapter then turns to phenomenology to further enrich how rural space can be conceived as performatively produced. However, this discussion of landscape phenomenological renderings of the subjective presents the conceptual framing with a challenge; the critique I highlight of the approach is its inherent individualism.

Consequently, Theories of Practice are then introduced as a means to allay some of the problematisation that emerges from thinking the body phenomenologically. In introducing Schatzkian Theories of Practice, I firstly draw out the commonalities in intellectual roots with phenomenology, before the exploration of practice illustrates the purchase of Schatzkian ontologies. Halfacree's triad is then rearticulated in discussion that addresses how this conceptual progression into a phenomenologically rendered Theories of Practice approach can augment unravelling the production of rural space. It is here that I align reworking Halfacree's triad with a Shovian (see, Shove and Panzar, 2005) vein of Schatzki's Theories of Practice. Here the chapter offers illustration of the conceptual framework progression, to depict the original intellectual connections being forged. The outcome of this is to acknowledge the import materiality has in this theoretical framing, such that the chapter then contends that following materiality in practice (vis-à-vis the Shovian approach) is how to gain empirical purchase on the questions of how rural space is produced. Thus, in the penultimate section, a case for why the car is a useful empirical lens is presented, drawing here on the more recently established mobilities literature to situate where this conceptual framework can make a contribution here also. Finally, the last section of the chapter assembles and consolidates the key notions developed across the theoretical discussion to mobilise these into a conceptual underpinning for establishing the empirical approach in the subsequent chapter. Thus, the result is a conceptual framework where each theoretical paradigm is layered upon and amongst others, in a succession of discussions that build the foundation to the thesis.

2.2 Conceptualising 'The Rural'

The foundation for my PhD study draws on the fields of rural geography and rural sociology. Much scholarly space is shared between these fields in their theorisations and empirical explorations of the non-urban spaces that people inhabit. Diverse conceptualisations of rural space have developed through this literature, establishing and then demonstrating rural contexts as dynamic sites of theoretical enquiry in their own right. That noted, arguably rural studies research should be understood as always embedded within the broader sociological and geographical disciplines it is emergent from (see, Panelli, 2006). So when Cloke (2006:20) characterises approaches to theorising rural space as

divisible into three categories – “functional concepts of rurality”, “political-economic concepts” and “social constructions” – his categorisation broadly echoes key shifts in the geographic discipline, and within social sciences, more generally (see, Cloke, 2000). The latter category for engaging with and understanding rural space, the social constructivist conceptualisation, emerged following the cultural turn towards the end of the twentieth century (Cloke, 1996) and has since been developed considerably, evident in the numerous publications, including edited collections, thinking critically around ‘the rural’ as a concept (see, for example, Halfacree, 1993; 1994; 1995; Marsden *et al*, 1993; Cloke and Thrift, 1994; Jones, 1995; Cloke and Little, 1997; Murdoch *et al*, 2003; Cloke, 2003a; 2003b; Cloke *et al*, 2006).

I take my starting point from recognising an enduring concern resonating through British rural studies with unpacking what ‘rural’ theoretically signifies. Taking a broadly post-structuralist approach to the rural (see, Panelli, 2006) I conceive it as fluid, produced and contingent. Working with ‘rural’ as a concept, scholarship has been unravelling how discourses of rurality, or ‘the rural’, are dominated by notions of the pastoral ‘idyll’ (see, for discussion, Bunce, 2003). ‘Rural’ discourse, or ‘the rural’, is the framing of British countryside space through an idyllic imaginary of countryside landscape and lives. The omnipresence of ‘rural’ as the currency of the British countryside’s social identity is widely debated within the field and largely accepted as evident across representational media both historically and currently (see, for discussion, Short, 2006). Moreover, this idyllic discursive ‘rural’ is appropriated and commodified within a myriad of material things (Cloke, 1994), and furthermore encompasses a vein of pastoralism that perpetuates the countryside lifestyle as desirable (Murdoch *et al*, 2003). Thus ‘the rural’ can be understood as evident and engaged with far beyond the spaces it ostensibly embodies.

As a discursive construction of British rural areas, ‘rural’ blurs the heterogeneity of British countryside space (Matless, 1994). Rural areas of the United Kingdom are arguably starkly different from the idyllic, discursive ‘rural’ imaginary, as scholars in the mid-nineties were keen to emphasise (see, Cloke *et al*, 1995). Cloke and Little’s (1997) edited collection acutely illustrates how the British countryside is obscured by reductionist representational practices of rural space as idyllic. Such important work arguably formed the basis for the next critical steps made in rural studies. Thinking critically about the notion of ‘rural’ through these empirical examples of ‘otherness and marginalisation’ (*ibid.*) served to further highlight the disconnect between conceptual and geographical spaces of rurality. Thus, theoretically, conceptualisations of ‘the rural’ have progressed considerably through recent decades; from noting how ‘rural’ is “increasingly a more mobile and malleable term” (Cloke and Thrift, 1994:1), to recognising how ‘rural’ discourse is conceived as distinct, disjunctive and disconnected from lived, rural spaces of the British countryside (see, Cloke, 2000).

Thus, through the theoretical literature, a gap opened up between the conceptual, discursive construction of rurality and the spatial, geographical actuality of rural space: a gap that continues to hold critical purchase for scholars wanting to unpack how rural spaces can be understood.

So, to continue to discuss ‘the rural’ as a concept disconnected from geographical spaces of rurality is deeply problematic. Scholarship that has focused on problematising the (theoretical) distinction illustrates that dualising ‘the rural’ and the geographical countryside only denies the complexity, since there is an inherent interconnection (Cloke, 2005; Halfacree, 1997). What these authors offer, however, is an approach that demonstrates the value in continuing to make use of drawing a distinction, theoretically at least, whilst they equally highlight the enduring challenge. Halfacree (2003:145) captures this challenge when he notes how ‘the rural idyll is not just significant as a way of representing the rural passively, since many people ‘buy in’ strongly and actively to this cultural imagination’. By noting ‘the rural’ as passively conceived, whilst selectively engaged with, he captures the tensions at play. Furthermore, in noting that people ‘buy-in’, Halfacree highlights the performative, practiced dimension integral to the reproduction of British countryside as conceptually ‘rural’ – a point that I return to in later section of this discussion. What is important to take from this opening overview, however, is how ‘the rural’ holds conceptual purchase that rural studies continues to grapple with developing. And, moreover, to borrow Gregory’s (1994) seminal phrase, ‘the rural’ is intrinsically understood as a ‘geographical imagination’ of British countryside space.

2.3 Conceptually Expanding ‘the Rural’

The basis of my conceptual framing of rural space begins with Halfacree’s (2006) triad for rural space (see *Figure 2.1*). Building on his earlier works theorising notions of rurality (Halfacree, 1993; 1995; 2003), the triad suggests conceiving of ‘the rural’ as ‘rural space’. Drawing from Lefebvre’s (1991) seminal work on the importance of the everyday, Halfacree details how rural space should be conceived as multifaceted in its construction (see *Figure 2.1*). Halfacree’s notion of ‘rural space’ takes the theoretical concept of ‘the rural’ to task. Through a conceptual framing influenced by Massey (1996), the situatedness of *rural space* is comprehensible and ‘the rural’ is rendered a constitutive part in producing that space. Comprising ‘rural space’ in the triad is the geographic, countryside locale, ‘representations of rurality’ and equally the ‘lives of the rural’.

Through this framing, ‘the rural’ is superseded as the label for comprehending rural engagement with the more contextual, fluid notion of ‘rural space’. It does this through each of the three dimensions it encapsulates; representations of ruralities, geographic ruralities and lived ruralities. Taking the first of these, when ‘representation’ is embedded within the

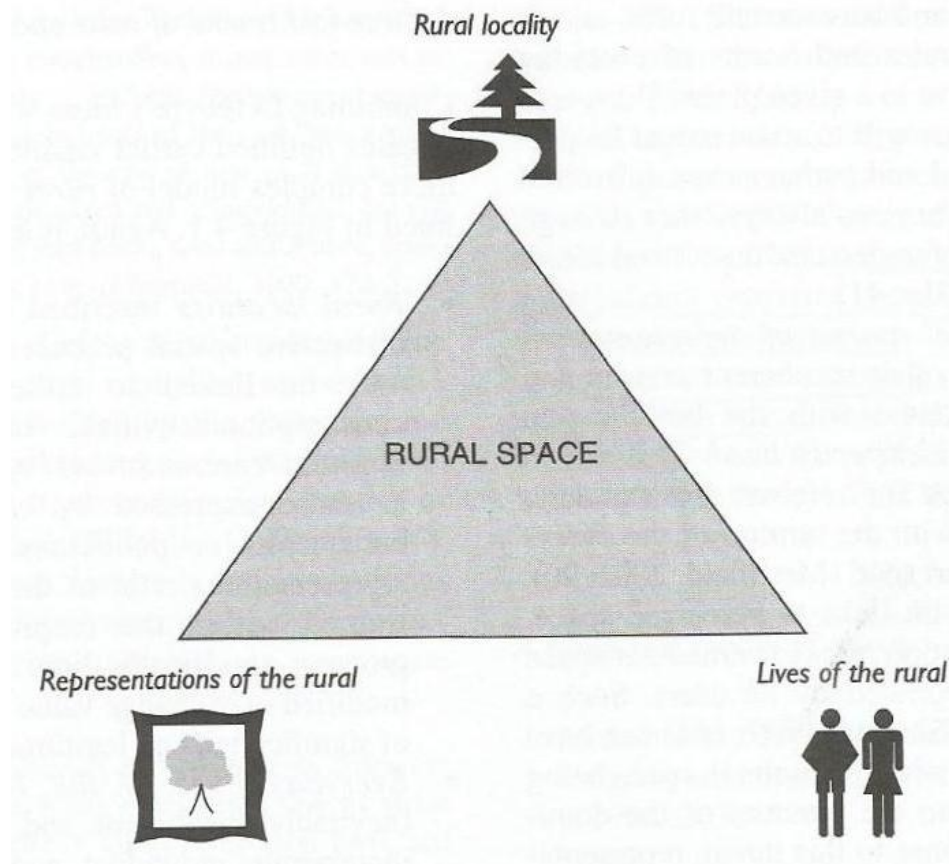


Figure 2.1: *Approaches to Rural Studies* (Halfacree, 2006: 52)

‘three-fold architecture of rural space’ (Halfacree, 2006) of the triad, classic understandings of ‘the rural’ as a discourse produced through representational media of the British countryside are overturned. The triad places representation as only part of the production of rural space but in a way that it is not dualistically opposed from geographically rural spaces – akin to the well-established disjuncture between imaginative and geographic rurals (see, Cloke, 2000). Second, and following on from this, is that geographically rural, or described as materially rural, spaces are again only the partial composition of the rural when positioning it instead as rural space through the triad. Finally, by injecting the everyday, lived spaces of the countryside into the dualisms of the ‘rural’ as both construct and countryside, this conceptual triad offers a means to open up how the rural spaces are (re)produced. It suggests everyday, situated lives are integral to the enduring construction of rural space. Rural space is conceived, therefore, both as produced and lived through the interactions people negotiate of representational, discursive notions of ‘the rural’ and the geographical locale they locate their production of rural space within.

The key shifts made through adopting Halfacree’s (2006) triad of rural space are important to delineate. I take from his approach the configuration of ‘the rural’ as being theoretically ‘rural space’ – whereby each negotiation of ‘the rural’ is in fact a spatial

negotiation; producing a geographical imaginary encountered either conceptually or in situ of the British countryside. Moreover, and imperative in the development that follows, the underpinning of productions of ‘rural space’ with the lived, ‘everyday’ opens up conceptual space to interpret how that interaction with the other dimensions of the triad are subjectively played out.

2.3.1 Developing the ‘Three-Fold Architecture’

To begin to develop this triad, it’s important to set the theoretical progression on the ‘rural’ against broader shifts in the social sciences. As the shift to more non-representational epistemologies (see, Thrift, 2008) has become more central within the wider geographical academy, more recent work has emerged in rural geography that recognises the value in an embodied approach (for review, see, Little and Leyshon, 2003) to understanding how engagements with rural space play out on an individual scale. Other works have sought to engage with the performative ways ‘the rural’ is representatively reproduced (Yarwood and Charlton, 2009; Horton, 2008a; 2008b), or emphasised the importance of bodies (see, Carolan, 2008), but have not fully engaged with the potential that a non-representational agenda offers (see, Thrift, 2008). Halfacree (2010) acknowledges that moving forward for rural studies requires embracing the non-representational epistemologies of ‘the rural’, and in more recent work he’s shown (along with Jesus Rivera) that thinking beyond the representations and engaging with practices (in this case of migration) is a productive approach to further understandings of how ‘rural’ life comes to be performatively reproduced (see, Halfacree and Jesus Rivera, 2011).

Whilst the conceptual triad incorporates ‘representations of rural’ to capture the imaginative geographies that shape production of rural space, arguably thinking through non-representational approaches illuminates how this dimension of the triad can be unpacked a little. I think it important to pay attention to arguments that remind there is still value in considering the representational (Castree and MacMillan, 2004), and offer more critical nuance to move forward with. Dewsbury *et al* capture the integration of representational processes:

“Non-representational theory takes representation seriously; representation not as a code to be broken or as an illusion to be dispelled rather representations are apprehended as performative in themselves; as doings”
(Dewsbury *et al*, 2002: 238).

Thus, non-representational theory encourages critical reflection on the production of representations. Therefore, conceiving ‘rural space’ as comprised through ‘representations’, such as the triad describes, denies the import of non-representational reproductions that perpetuate ‘the rural’ discursively. Arguably this dimension of Halfacree’s triad could be

rearticulated as discourses of ‘the rural’; understood as produced and maintained by both representational and non-representational practices. Moreover, ‘rural space’ can then be conceptualised as produced and maintained through both representational and non-representational processes.

At the ‘rural locale’ vertex of Halfacree’s triad, a broader reading of the role of the material countryside space within the production of ‘rural space’ is possible in two key ways. Firstly, the triad places ‘rural locale’, read as space that is geographically rural, as imperative in the production of rural space *per se*. In the established rural studies literature, discussions of the disconnect between geographical spaces of countryside and the conceptual space of ‘the rural’ have already been noted (see, Cloke, 2003*b*). However, in reworking how this vertex of Halfacree’s triad can be understood, this literature serves to problematise having ‘rural locale’ omnipresent in the triad’s production of rural space. By unpacking this vertex, to rethink what can be understood as key from ‘rural locale’, the resounding reflection from the wider literature is that the triad does not need to be wedded to referencing geographically rural space. Instead, the ‘rural locale’ vertex could be interpreted more broadly. Although conceived by Halfacree as materially, geographically, ‘rural locale’, a more expansive reading of what this captures, could redefine this vertex to be capturing the material imperative to examine the production of rural space.

Secondly, this can also be understood through rethinking how ‘rural locale’ is itself produced. Therefore, I would suggest that what Halfacree also does at this vertex is gesture at the importance of material context by reminding that conceiving ‘rural locale’ is inherently subjective. If the ‘rural locale’ is to be understood as integral to the production of rural space, then individuals producing rural space have some degree of autonomy to decide what, and critically where, that rural is located. This can be understood by turning to unpack the production of space more closely, drawing on Thrift:

‘the fabric of space is so multifarious that there are always holes and tears in which new forms of expression can come into being. Space is therefore constitutive in the strongest possible sense and it is not a misuse of the term to call it performative, as many components continually act back’ (Thrift, 2003*a*:2023).

Thus ‘rural space’, in light of this, can be understood as a bricolage of performative dimensions and spatial contingencies, produced through a subjective framing. Hence, this vertex of the triad also suggests the import of the subject to define the material context through which they produce rural space. It serves to emphasise that the material dimension of Halfacree’s triad is intrinsically produced. Consequently, to develop the triad, I contend that rearticulating ‘rural locale’ into material dimension is valid conceptual progression.

It is that subjectivity, inherent in the production of rural space, that forms a third tenet for developing the triad. Halfacree adopts ‘lives of the rural’, and in so doing, suggests

the import of the everyday, lived contexts through which rural space is produced. Halfacree cites Lefebvre (1991) as pivotal to his composition of the triad, and this is none more so visible than in the 'lives of the rural vertex. A return to the language of Lefebvre is useful to further critically engage with the triad; thus 'lives of the rural' become comprehensible as 'everyday'. But, what is meant by 'everyday', and what can be understood by 'everyday lives'? For Lefebvre (1991) the everyday is the medium through which space is animated and becomes meaningful socially and historically (Hubbard, 2005). The notion of everyday in the triad therefore, in a Lefebvrian sense, incorporates a lived, situated, sensed dimension to the production of rural space. Rural space can be understood as subjectively negotiated, rather than epistemologically disconnected from the subject. Ontologies of the rural thus may exist that produce rural space – a question the thesis can empirically explore. Thus, the rural, conceived as 'rural space' produced through Halfacree's triad, needs to always be contextualised through the perspective of the individual producing, experiencing or feeling it.

But these notions that characterise this vertex of Halfacree's triad offer little purchase for critical reflection on *how* the subjective everyday is experienced. Rather bluntly, both 'lives of the rural', and the analogous Lefebvrian 'everyday', lack conceptual nuance and depth. They lack nuance because subjective experience is rendered to mundane registers, when arguably experiences of the lived everyday range from the banal to the extraordinary, in temporalities of lifetimes through to minute moments. Equally they lack depth because it does not give deference to the perceptual, cumulative and comprehending subject that possesses memories and aspirations all within their production of rural space. There is much potential in conceiving rural space as subjectively rendered, but the language and conceptual framing offered by the triad, and read through adopting Lefebvre, provides little purchase for positioning the subject.

2.3.2 Thinking the Everyday as Performed

It is useful to take performance theory as a starting point to begin to develop the dimension of 'lived experience' within the production of rural space. As already discussed above, rural space itself can be conceived as produced performatively, but here I want to more specifically hone attention in on unpacking the performative dimensions of the 'lives' that animate the triad. I need to acknowledge Tim Edensor's (2006) work on performing rurality, in the first instance, because I think this is illustrative of how far rural studies has critically engaged with performance theory *per se*. Edensor draws on the well-rehearsed distinction between 'the rural' and geographical spaces of rurality as a conceptual approach to unpack lived actualities of the countryside, whilst aiming to develop perspectives on the rural through conceiving it as performed. In principle, this offers a means to embellish the

understanding of lives of the rural developed so far, as his work demonstrates the value in thinking engagements with rurality as performed. However, Edensor's contribution lacks articulation of the complexities being performatively negotiated in those moments. His approach to understanding performing the rural lacks critical consideration of how those performances encompass a sense of discursive 'rural' imaginaries *per se*.

Still, in opening space to theorise rurality as performed, Edensor (*ibid.*) bridges rural studies into performance theory. Performance theory provides a language and framing to think about the everyday individual as a subjectively negotiated performative self that actively engages their 'front-self' and/or their 'back-self' attuned to the social situation they're experiencing (Goffman, 1959). Goffman (1959) conceives of the world as a stage, conceptually framing the autonomy of the individual within the production of everyday life. Goffman's work serves as a useful starting point for thinking about performance but this is now somewhat superseded as performance theory having purchase for critical geographies. More latterly performance theory emphasises the interconnectedness of discourse to the produced identities that we each live through in the diverse contexts within which people (can) operate (Butler, 1990; 1993). Butler's (*ibid.*) seminal work on performance and performativity hails from a (post)feminist epistemology (differing from Goffman who does not problematise the subject but instead takes it for granted) that has since been appropriated in the geographic discipline. Pratt (2000: 578) succinctly summarises Butler's seminal work on performativity as 'outlining a theory of subject formation'. The key argument I note from this literature, however, is that of Gregson and Rose (2000). They emphasise that performance, critiquing Goffman through drawing on Butler, is always only ever an enaction of performativity; thus they argue for the intrinsic link between how people perform and the interpretation of that performance in the moment, through the discursive registers that they're comprehending their comportment through. Using this framing and language of performing rural space (rather than 'living' it), renders the discursive rural dimension of the triad to be conceived as always, already embedded within the production of rural space through the situated individual. Thus thinking the triad through performance theory establishes where connections between the vertices of the triangle emerge as imperative. Performativity blurs the distinction between 'living' and 'representation', since it interconnects the conceptual triad's distinct dimensions, on a theoretical level. The question, of course, is therefore how do such interconnections between doing rural space and discursively producing rural space manifest in everyday lives?

Conceptualising the everyday as a performance centralises the scale of critical focus as the body. In the discussion above the intrinsic geographical scale of reference is the subject's performative body. 'Lived experience' occurs through the bodies of those engaging with producing rural space. The politics of performance emerge as the intimate relations

between the bodies performing. A central concern of post-feminist writing (which Butler could be labelled as), the body can be understood as the site through which performance is carried out, endured and conveyed within the spatial context it occupies. Therefore in situating the focus on the body, it is important to do so within the context of space, as Longhurst reminds;

‘bodies and spaces construct each other in complex and nuanced ways. It is impossible to talk about bodies without talking about space and vice versa. Bodies are performed, resisted, disciplined and oppressed not simply in but through space’ (Longhurst, 2005: 93).

Longhurst captures the inherent corpo/reality of thinking about space as performatively negotiated and the inherent struggle the body endures as intimately relational with space. Through this notion, individuals don’t simply perform space in an objective manner, rather their bodies engender its production. Hence, this positioning of spatial production centralises the body as being the context from where other spaces are produced.

By extension from this, as rural spaces are produced, their negotiation and consumption must be understood as performatively subjective and intrinsically defined by the haptic body that is engaging with them. Thinking through performance theories develops the way that the production of rural space can be conceived and the scale at which critical (empirical) attention can be directed. In the context of Halfacree’s triad, enriching the vertex of ‘lives of the rural’ through performance theory offers a means to expand the conceptual rendering and language available to explore how this aspect of rural space production may manifest. I suggest this is feasible by refocusing attention to the embodied scale of the subject living, experiencing the ‘everyday’ through which they can conceivably be producing rural space.

2.4 Thinking Through Phenomenology

To push forward the existing debates in rural studies on performing ‘the rural’, into asking more questions about how people perform and engage in embodied ways with producing rural spaces, I see opportunity in thinking the body through phenomenological registers. Thinking phenomenologically differs from thinking about the body through performance, since phenomenology emphasises the pre-cognitive body that shapes embodied performances (I flesh out how below). Drawing on landscape phenomenology offers a particularly useful set of concepts, as I later discuss. Critically, in prioritising the consuming, performative and embodied individual, the literature exploring landscape phenomenologically emphasises the importance of critically reflecting on the subjective, sentient body through which engagements with space are negotiated.

Grounded in the critical philosophy of Merleau-Ponty (1958), and, in part, Heidegger (1971), Tim Ingold (1993; 2001; 2007*a*) and latterly John Wylie (2002; 2003; 2005; 2006; 2007) have demonstrated the theoretical and empirical purchase of thinking spatial engagements with the world through the body. Phenomenology foregrounds the living, corporeal body as the basis for all perception of the world in which a subject engages (Merleau-Ponty, 1958). It positions the individual as the epistemological medium, whereby the understandings of the world they are accessing are rooted through the body in which they inhabit. Each individual's perception of the world around them is shaped by their embodied construction of landscapes in which they inhabit. 'Landscape' does not mean a visualisation of space in its conventional sense, but rather the way in which the world is spatially experienced around the subject. Landscape phenomenology therefore positions the everyday encounters individuals have with the world as an enduring negotiations within their subjectively shaped landscapes of bodily performance. Connections can be drawn to (post)feminist epistemologies arguably too, summarised acutely by Donna Haraway (1988) in the now seminal phrase 'situated knowledges'. To comprehend space as subjectively produced through the vessel of the individual's body is to acknowledge the inherent situatedness in understanding the world. For Haraway, 'situated knowledges' stemmed from a (post)feminist geography emphasising the inherent subjectivity with which we experience space; conceptually however, she advocates an epistemology that lends itself well in explanation for what landscape phenomenology suggests. Using these landscape theorists' vein of phenomenology to conceptualise the way individuals perform engagements with rural space serves to position how each articulation of 'rural space' can be understood as a subjective, situated negotiation within the context of their lives.

Tim Ingold (1993; 2001; 2007*a*) has developed a notion that aides the appropriation of landscape phenomenological thinking to unpacking the 'lived' dimension of the 'rural space' triad. For Ingold, landscape is an animate production negotiated visually and aurally that he proposes can be captured within the concept of 'taskscape'. 'Taskscape' captures the subjective moment when the perceptual, corporeal body makes sense of the space it inhabits as a 'landscape' within which the individual is bound by their own memories, sensibilities and sensuality. 'Taskscape' emphasises how spatial engagement is always in flux between the space inhabited – or to use Heidegger's (1971) notion, 'dwelled' within. What shapes the individual's perception temporally, culturally, socially, historically and politically is always rendered through their bodily experience. Thus, although taskscape hails from a landscape vein of phenomenological thinking, I conceive its purchase to be much broader. Taskscape can be thought of as the ever-present making sense of the world that everyone does all of the time they're engaged within it. To perform everyday life is a taskscape of bodily engagement that is productive of space (to conceive space in the vein of Thrift, as discussed earlier).

Taskscape, when understood as a form of spatial engagement that is productive, personal and performed captures a nuance to current theoretical framings being used in rural studies; making contextualising the subject imperative. Moreover, 'taskscape' encompasses more than 'dwelling', which Cloke and Jones (2001) adopted, because taskscape centralises the intellectual concern on the subject. It focuses attention to the way each individual may negotiate 'rural' within their rural locales, to produce *their* rural space. 'Taskscape' produces lived, animate realities that are performative of space.

To put this to work, in the context of how people engage with the rural, arguably there is a need to begin with recognising that the sentient and sensual body is always the basis for the perception and production of 'rural space'. Given that social and cultural values of UK rural spaces are mediated by and always already shaped through the discursive 'rural' that the space is intimately entwined (Halfacree, 2006), the bodily dimensions of 'lived experience', theoretically, must intersect with representative and discursive concepts of rurality in the process of producing those situated encounters with the countryside. Thus, in assembling a 'taskscape' of engagement with rural space, the perception produced is always routed through, and shaped by, but also (re)producing discourses of the 'rural'.

To return to Halfacree's conceptual triad, rendering this through landscape phenomenology further nuances the 'lives of the rural'. It suggests that those lives are themselves performances of spatial engagement. Moreover, those 'lives of the rural' are not just performative, but can be understood at a phenomenological scale, whereby they are embodied, corporeal engagements that (theoretically) produce rural space through sensual and pre-cognitive registers. Such positioning opens up exciting new conceptual space. Consequently people's everyday active taskscape engagement with rural space engenders a couple of questions: how rural space subjectively is produced through embodied registers, and, how those productions of rural space navigate notions of 'the rural' subjectively too.

Although landscape phenomenology, rendered through Ingold and Wylie, offers a conceptual progression for the rural studies literature, it does have limitations that are important to note here. Harrison (2009) makes a valid observation when he critiques Ingold's 'taskscape' for setting performance up as unproblematically enduring, when, for some performances (for example, Harrison goes on to explore sleep) the endurance variously engages the body. An empirical reflection emerges from noting this critique. I take from this that performing 'taskscape', within the conceptual triad to produce 'rural space' means that a performance that is actively engaging in bodily experience needs to be identified in order for the questions to be empirically explored – an issue I return to in the following section of this discussion.

The other issue I take with using taskscape as the conceptual framing is the inherent individualism it implies. By prioritising the individual scale as the site which produces rural

space, the wider connections and collective similarities are marginalised. With the centrality of taskscape at the embodied scale there is a risk that solely using this vein of landscape phenomenology could reduce the negotiation of rural space to at best esoteric and, at worst, always inherently contingent, lacking collective conceptualisations. It is important therefore to strike a balance on what taskscape theoretically offers. It is clearly useful to think the everyday encounters of human and space through a framing that captures the lived, carnal reality of the perception individuals' subjectively and transiently produce. Taskscape reminds of the dynamics of space, insofar as the space people produce is rendered as contingent, conceptually defined and commanding a multisensory composition. But the only way to mitigate this critique of individualism is through recognising Ingold's emphasis that taskscape has an inherent temporality, such that taskscapes can accrue and endure. Taskscape navigates the temporalities that precede its construction, and emphasises the temporality of everyday life as always embedded in the dynamics of time it performatively references. There is some scope therefore to conceive of rural space as enduring reproduced through successive taskscapes, but how these socially coalesce, or intersubjectively reproduce space is difficult to render through the taskscape notion alone. It is evident in the landscape how taskscapes of engagement collectively manifest – Ingold (2007a) in 'Lines' uses the example of a footpath trampled into a trace across a field – but conceptually, taskscape gives little deference or purchase for theorising (and therefore empirically unpacking) how successive productions of (rural) space accumulate. To begin to understand how rural space is socially and culturally performed across time, space and subjectivities, I need a conceptual framing that enables me to address questions beyond the individual; questions at the social scale.

2.5 Introducing Theories of Practice

The conceptual framework thus far has identified questions to develop through the rural studies context, and took these through a consideration of performance theory. Performance theory led into advocating the theoretical purchase of thinking lived dimensions of everyday life phenomenologically, through Ingold's 'taskscape' notion. Despite having already layered several conceptual framings atop each other, there is still further to develop the discussion because I am to illustrate the collective (and empirical) contexts through which the development of the triad can be rendered. Taskscape nuances the way that 'lives of the rural' can be understood, but it does not have enough sociological purchase to develop more than subjective epistemologies of rural space. Progressing from here, I suggest, requires conceiving taskscapes of others as collected in particular places, times and spaces. Consequently, I want to work with the notion of 'taskscape' by enmeshing its conceptualisation of the subject within a broader, more socially constitutive theoretical

framework. In making this move I therefore suggest a shift upwards in scale from the individual to the social is facilitated if I begin to unpack the intricacies of practice theory.

A word should be said first about the seminal works that introduce ‘practice’ as a means for theorising social life in order to establish why I have adopted the approach I detail below. Alan Latham (2003: 1901) succinctly summed up the field when he said, “interest in practice is hardly new”. To conceptualise successive performances as constitutive of practices, draws from the writing of Bourdieu and Giddens amongst others (for discussion see, Latham, 2003). In a common move amongst scholars writing about practices, there is often an initial overview of the progression of practice theorisation (see Shove *et al*, 2012), through from Giddens’ (1984) ‘structuration theory’ to Bourdieu’s (1990) notion of ‘habitus’. However the former focuses too readily on social structures. Whereas the latter, particularly ‘habitus’, suggests conscious, engaged behaviours repeat within the everyday scenarios where they’re played out, and thus lacks critical purchase against the phenomenological and performative theorisation of the everyday as liminal and situated. Fortunately, more recent work in the sociality of practices in everyday life offers much more critical purchase.

Theories of Practice, as developed by Schatzki (1996; 2001; 2002), rethinks the social, and consequently coheres as a conceptual framework for understanding how all social life is lived. Initially, it is useful to acknowledge that a Schatzkian ontology shares similarities with how Ingold’s taskscape positions the body, owing much to the common philosophical roots in the work of Heidegger (1971). Taking the site of theoretical engagement as the interconnections between people, places, imaginaries and things that they interact with, Schatzkian practice theory proposes an ontology that one is always participating in collective, social practices through the subjective and situated performances of everyday life. For Schatzki, practices are the medium through which social life makes sense both individually and collectively. To conceive of the world as practiced is to recognise the self-determination which individuals have to shape their own everyday lives. Alan Warde (2005: 134) expresses how practice theory enmeshes with notions of performance when he asserts, ‘a performance presupposes a practice’, a point that Shove *et al* (2012) further embellish:

“practices exist as performances. It is through performance, through the immediacy of doing, that the ‘pattern’ provided by the practice-as-entity is filled out and reproduced. It is only through successive moments of performance that the interdependencies between elements which constitute the practice as entity are sustained over time. [...] individuals feature as the carriers of hosts of a practice. This is a radical departure from more conventional approaches [to human subjectivity], where understandings, know-how, meanings and purposes are taken to be personal attributes” (Shove *et al*, 2012: 7).

Performances accrue to produce social meaning in the form of social practices. For Schatzki, practices are created through the enduring ‘routinised behaviours’ (Reckwitz, 2002) of any particular performance. The key distinction that Schatzkian practice theory can make from its forerunners is it emplaces subjective performances as constitutive of broader social practices. Social practices’ existence are dependent upon the performances of individuals to sustain them. In doing so, Schatzki also presents a nuanced social ontology:

“The social is a field of embodied, materially interwoven practices centrally organised around shared practical understandings. This conception contrasts with accounts that privilege individuals, (interactions, language, signifying systems, the life world, institutions/roles, structures, or systems in defining the social. These phenomena, say practice theorists, can only be analysed by the field of practices. Actions, for instance, are embedded in practices, just as individuals are constituted within them” (Schatzki, 2001: 3).

Thus the social is produced through doing of everyday life. It is an inherently pragmatic conceptualisation of the lived experience of the world.

Furthermore, for Schatzki practices have dimensionality. Social practices come into being through three interconnected tenets: as he defines, “a practice is a temporally evolving, open-ended set of doings and sayings linked by practical understandings, rules, teleoaffective structure, and general understandings”. Taking each of these tenets at a time, practices come to be understood as negotiated, produced and inherently contextual. By ‘doings and sayings’ Schatzki identifies how performances can share similar and repeated bodily comportments and literal expressions. The embodied doing is as valuable to a practice as the communicative sayings that may or may not accompany the performance. Tacit knowledges feature as critical also, since the performative moment is conceptualised as negotiated through the sentient body. Binding practices are ‘rules’, ‘teleoaffective structures’ and ‘general understandings’, which for Schatzki are all the imaginaries, attitudes and values that circulate within the comprehension of the practice. Furthermore, ‘teleoaffectivities’ is an expression Schatzki (2002) develops to encompass the emotional and normative dimensions that refine through which practices coalesce. Schatzki provides a way to conceive of lived experience as a situated negotiation, since social practices are subjectively (re)produced. Moreover, and crucially for this framework, he theoretically offers a social capacity to situate the phenomenological notions within.

Broadening the conceptual framework through Theories of Practice serves to contribute to an expanding literature too. In the last decade, there has been a rise in the conceptual interest being sought from theories of practice; indeed as Schatzki *et al*’s (2001) edited collection entitled ‘The Practice turn in Contemporary Theory’ demonstrates. Much of the rise in interest in practice can be traced into the post-structuralist epistemologies (see, Strohmayr, 2005) and turn towards, as Latham (2003: 1901) notes, “taking the body

seriously introduc[ing] phenomenological registers that exceed representation”. Particularly useful has been the work appropriating Schatzkian practice theory within consumption studies, and arguably where the majority of empirical application (and development) of Theories of Practice has been published. Seminal papers from Reckwitz (2002) and Warde (2005) expand on Schatzki’s key concepts, working through them in a more amenable language. It is against this backdrop of recent literature using theories of practice conceptual frameworks that further avenues for developing the conceptual triad of rural space open up.

2.5.1 Using Theories of Practice for Conceptualising ‘Rural Space’

Scholarship using theories of practice provided a useful conceptual framework for understanding the composition of a social practice. I see the work in consumption studies that has gained traction on Schatzki’s notions of practice (Shove and Panzar, 2005; Reckwitz, 2002; Warde, 2005; Watson and Shove, 2008; Watson, 2012; Shove *et al*, 2012) as offering key notions to utilise. This work has demonstrated the importance of rendering social practices through a material lens, drawing on material culture studies (see, Appadurai, 1986; Miller, 2005; 2007; 2008; 2010) and ANT and STS approaches (see, Latour, 1999). Consequently, social practices have come to be understood as having integral material dimensions. For example, in their seminal paper on Nordic walking, Shove and Panzar (2005) centralise the material to their conceptual framework for practice, advocating a three-point theoretical framing for social practices as comprising ‘skills’ (or ‘competence’), ‘materiality’ (or ‘things’) and ‘meanings’. In constructing this practice triad, Shove, *et al* (Shove and Panzar, 2005; Watson and Shove, 2008; Shove *et al*, 2012), has long been building from the basis that a theories of practice conceptual framework can be used to unpack social and cultural lives. They achieve this by setting out a practice triad that arguably serves as an effective toolkit to interrogate the intricacies of subjective performances, through the interconnections of skills employed to achieve each performance, the integral materialities and the meanings that circulate.

In presenting a conceptual framework for the production of social life through embodied interactions with the world, theories of practice offers much broader purchase than phenomenology. While phenomenology nuances the way in which the ‘lived experience’ dimension of the triad is conceived, theories of practice provides a framework for challenging each dimension of the triad to (theoretically) function as a dimension of practice. I am struck by how a theories of practice conceptual framework echoes that of Halfacree’s rural space triad (see *Figure 2.1*). In depicting rural space as produced through ‘representational’, ‘lived experience’ and ‘rural locales’, there is not much critical distance to travel to think of ‘rural space’ as *practised*. Consideration of each dimension of the rural space triad illustrates this theoretical reasoning.

Firstly take the dimension of ‘representational’ in the rural space triad. Arguably this can be conceived as the discursive and equally non-representational reproductions of ‘rural’ that circulate ‘endemically’ in British social and cultural life (Cloke, 2003*b*). It is this currency of ‘rural’ imagery, aesthetics and attitudes that propagate the dominant meanings for rural space. As Cloke (2003*b*) has reminded, conceptualisations of the countryside are rendered through the dominant notions of British rurality as idyllic space. Therefore I contend that just as ‘rural space’ is always performed through negotiating the imaginaries it evokes, theories of practice would attribute these notions as the currency of *meaning* that binds the (re)production of rural space in practice.

The second dimension to consider is ‘lived experience’. Arguably this is the embodied doing of everyday life. I have already detailed several theoretical nuances to the ‘lived experience’ dimension of Halfacree’s triad, but through the discussion thus far I have not articulated this dimension in terms of skills or competence. I have, however, established that the ‘lived experience’ can be conceived as the embodied *doing* through the notion of ‘taskscape’. But, in the framing of practice, the embodied doing of these performances can be conceived as socially coalescing, becoming ‘routinised behaviours’ (Reckwitz, 2002), that can be conceived as the ‘competencies’ or ‘skills’ intrinsic to practicing rural space.

To do this requires enmeshing practice theory with landscape phenomenology; though this needs much less critical bridging that it may at first seem. It is a nuanced approach to conceptually unite theories of practice with phenomenological conceptualisation of the subject, since they exist as distinct areas of scholarship. But epistemologically and ontologically they arguably share foundational tenets and have common philosophical roots in Heideggerian phenomenological thought. Both theories of practice and phenomenology foreground the body as the site of critical interest, though each positioning its purchase in different ways. As discussed earlier, a (landscape) rendering of phenomenology provides the basis for understanding everyday ‘lives of the rural’ as produced through the body and shaped by the corporeality of the subject. Theories of Practice takes the body subject as a given, focusing on the performative capacity it wields to produce and participate socially. The dimensions of a social practice, according to Schatzki, attend to the dynamics of the individual (for example through ‘teleoaffective structures, which could be conceived as inherently subjectively negotiated) but the corporal, carnal dimension of the body is engaged with largely through ‘bodily doings and sayings’ (Schatzki, 2002: 72) that comprise social practices.

Take Shove and Panzar’s (2005) work as an example. They illustrate that Nordic walking can be conceived as a practice through the material dimensions of walking sticks, the skills of using them and the meanings associated with achieving a walk. Each of their participants who practiced Nordic walking accomplished the practice, but critically, each

from their own embodied perspectives. Their work focuses on how the practice is structured, coheres and each subjective performance coalesces to produce Nordic walking. But the Theories of Practice approach doesn't readily focus on how those situated performances are subjectively produced and experienced. If each walker's performance is explored in-depth through a conceptual framing of 'taskscape', then the situated dynamics of the practice would emerge. More could be learned about how practices become routinised through bodies, without losing the conceptual framing of theories of practice that coheres those performances socially.

This reading of Theories of Practice I adopt should be understood as being very much emergent from the collective of work Elizabeth Shove, and her collaborators, developed (see, for examples, Shove and Panzar, 2005; Watson and Shove, 2008; Shove *et al*, 2012), that interprets Schatzkian Theories of Practice to a triad of material, skill and meaning. But the broader critique I have is that Theories of practice, understood in the Shovian sense, centralises the production of social life on the competencies of the subject, but offers little in terms of critical constructs to unpack how the subject negotiates those competencies. As the name denotes, social practice theory, is inherently 'social'. Its concern with the subject lacks in-depth reflection on the nuances of performance that might be relationally constructed contingently upon many dimensions of the subject's situatedness, whilst within the unpacking and articulation of a practice they are engaging in, they exhibit the dimensions of practice at the level at which they are (socially) understood. Thus maintaining the rendering of the subject through phenomenology within a theories of practice conceptual triad offers a nuanced theoretical language to conceptualise the way rural space comes to be produced.

Finally, the third dimension Theories of Practice offers much critical potential also. Halfacree's triad suggests the material dimension to practicing 'rural space' is the rural locale *per se*. In doing so, practicing 'rural space' can be understood as always (in some way) negotiating materially rural locales. Although Halfacree ties his triad to rural locales *per se* (but this can be challenged and I do so above), the material dimension of a practice does not have to be a single entity. Practices have a multitude of material dimensions (Watson and Shove, 2008). Other materialities can arguably also occupy the material dimension for practicing 'rural space' – a point I further explore in the next section. It is the way that the materialities come together in situated contexts and subjective performances that engender the reproduction of a practice.

In short, Theories of Practice provides the conceptual framework with a structure to underpin developing Halfacree's 'rural space' triad. 'Rural space' comes to be conceived not as an entity produced subjectively, but as negotiated, and collaboratively sustained through practices. 'Rural space' can be conceived as performed, practiced, a practice in and

of itself and therefore the route through which rural space is produced is through conceiving it as a practice. Thus, 'rural space' and 'rural' practice are arguably analogous theoretically, since 'rural space' can only be understood as produced through dominant notions of 'rural' that are inherently interconnected to the lived dimensions of their enduring production and circulation, and variably to the geographical spaces of rurality that materially manifest. Practices of 'rural' may or may not incorporate a materially rural space but they always inherently involve materialities.

I take these theoretical influences in the manner I've described because they offer terms of expression and imaginaries of the everyday that capture the intricacies of the subjective but enmesh with the sociological scale at which rural space is equally produced and negotiated. Conceptualising the production of rural space as performative, whilst cohering as social practice, is a complex theoretical framework, layering multiple notions to achieve an approach that can be used to construct understandings of individuals' negotiation of rural space. However, unpacking and then reassembling each of these theoretical influences enables the research to move forward into setting out an empirical agenda, with a language that attends to the nuances of everyday engagements with rural space. Each theoretical framing dovetails upon the next to contribute to a conceptual framework concerned equally with the triad's tensions between the vertices as its constitutive parts.

2.5.2 Materialising Practising 'Rural Space'

Following Shove and Panzar (2005) and latterly Shove *et al* (2012), what this literature suggests is that tracing mundane materialities in performance can develop knowledges about social and cultural practice. I contend, therefore, that tracing a single materiality used for performing rural space is a valuable approach to open up how the practice relationally produces rural space. This theoretical sphere also shows that expanding Halfacree's triad from notionally incorporating material spaces of the 'rural locale' to an inclusion of all material dimensions inherent within the production of rural space serves to further embellish the viability of thinking the 'rural' as practiced.

There are infinite material dimensions that play a role within the production of rural space. At the most obvious level, the key material dimension is countryside space *per se*. The countryside provides a material context to the triad, but within that arguably there are a myriad of other materialities which shape engagement with it, and ultimately the production of rural space. Above, I noted the significance of practices that actively engage the body—drawing on Harrison's (2009) work on sleep—a key point when thinking about how the materialities that surround the body may shape the practising of 'rural space'. For me, the debates in practice theory that centralise a material lens highlight how selecting a material to trace through practices of producing 'rural space' is critical.

Consequently, a word should initially be said about materialities *of* the rural. It has long been recognised that materialities can embody notions of rurality as commodification of the rural ideal propagates (Cloke, 1994). I would suggest that some materialities are already discursively scripted (values generated both representatively and non-representatively) with notions of 'rural' more readily apparent for some materialities than others. Take the classic aga cooking stove, for example. As a centrepiece to a 'rural' 'family' 'middle-class' kitchen, much of what the aga, and its performance, encapsulates could be traced back to idealisms of rural space. Other materialities that are arguably embedded within producing rural space are, for example, walking boots, waterproofs or picnic baskets. On the one hand tracing these materialities in practice would provide a way to begin to understand how rural space is practiced, however I propose a different approach, for several reasons that I map out below.

What Schatzki's Theories of Practice neglects to an extent is the role of geography in shaping practices. Geographical understandings of each of the dimensions of practice are written into his narrative (see, Schatzki, 2002), but it's important to state the obvious too to get to the crux of the 'materiality' complication within developing the empirical approach: practices must happen *somewhere*. In the conceptual triad of rural space the somewhere is the countryside, but the countryside is simultaneously the material dimension to the practice. This is not a fallacy. Where practices happen inevitably forms part of the material dimension of their existence. But, if one is to trace subjective performances of rural space through a material dimension to understand how rural space is produced in practice, then a materiality that is something more tangible and tactile than the countryside *per se* is of course more useful. A materiality that can be followed as it inevitably shapes the relationality between the dimensions of practising rural space would enable a research agenda to develop questions of the negotiation of rural space through that material lens, rather than trying to understand the production of rural space through its own material referent.

The obvious materiality of rural space that should be noted is the countryside *per se*. But, theoretically, what constitutes the material dimension of rural space is a subjectively negotiated conceptualisation. That is not to deny that the countryside manifests as distinct space from developed, more densely populated (urban) areas – and in the introduction to the thesis I work hard to identify the research area as geographically rural through various ways – rather to bring the definition of its experience into question. There are two fundamental theoretical points to take from this. Firstly, the production of rural space draws on a material negotiation of the countryside – but arguably that can happen anywhere if the material countryside referent is merely a simulacrum (Halfacree, 1993). Secondly, even if the practice of rural space happens in a geographically rural locale, it is only defined as the countryside relationally through an individual's subjective experience. That is, to reiterate, because the definition of being in the material space of the countryside is inherently

subjective. Thus, the production of rural space is reliant on the countryside materially only insofar as the individual defines it. That presents a challenge empirically to trace this as a materiality in practice. To unpack how rural space is practiced, a materiality that is enduringly tangible is essential, but moreover, a materiality that can be conceived as engaged with to produce rural space, within geographically rural areas offers much potential.

Understanding how Halfacree's triad of rural space may manifest empirically is too expansive in scope without some form of tangible material viewpoint for a research agenda to cultivate from. To understand how rural space is produced, through the circulation of meanings that it is mediated through, within the everyday 'lay' knowledges of producing rural (see, Jones, 1995), requires a means through which practices of rural space can be situated within and set against empirically. Moreover, practices should not be conceived as isolated performances of social life, rather as contextually (re)negotiated, enmeshing amongst and as ever in tension with other everyday social practices, in temporally contingent, situated ways. Thus, although initially it may appear to complicate the conceptual framework by suggesting that empirical attention on the practice of automobility in production of rural space – a superfluous layering of practice triads upon and against each other, maybe – driving practices could serve as a focus to begin to understand the myriad of (mobile) spaces, subjective values and bodily registers through which rural space is contingently produced.

There are a handful of key authors that illustrate the value in focusing on the role of cars within everyday life from a Theories of Practice perspective (Birtchnell, 2012; Watson, 2012; Shove *et al*, 2012). For each of these authors, their focus demonstrates the way automobility as a whole can be unpacked as a collective of social practices and that cars particularly offer a rich site for unravelling the intricacies of how practices manifest. It is against this backdrop that I conceptualise the car, and driving more broadly, to serve as an empirical focus that could be used to open up how 'rural space' is produced. At first it may seem non-sensical to try to empirically comprehend the production of rural space through such a framing as the car, since it inevitably serves to swell the already theoretically-rich conceptual framework developed thus far. That is because using the car as a material focus obviously requires enduring recognition of the accompanying plethora of automobility practices associated with it. However, I would argue, that using the car as an empirical lens provides a context and a conduit through which the production of rural space can begin to be understood.

For example, Watson (2012) uses practice theory to argue for thinking (auto)mobility systemically. Shove *et al* (2012) use the example of driving to illustrate the intricacies of practice linkages with earlier forms of mobility. In highlighting the

temporalities inherent within driving, they equally identify the associated material dimensions that shape the modern use of cars:

“many elements of driving pre-date the arrival of the car itself and in the early days, continuities with horse riding, cycling, machine operation and sea faring (the red and green of traffic lights) were more evident than they are today” (Shove *et al*, 2012: 26).

In practice terms, cars present a collective of subjective performances in and of themselves that come together to produce driving, automobility and motion through space. Cars can be understood as the material dimension through which their meaning is relationally negotiated, and the competence to control the car comes together, to create the performance of driving and the practice of automobility. What's more Shove *et al*'s broader point, from their focus on the car, illustrates how practices are interconnected with other practices. The car is the material dimension through which automobility is achieved, but this requires unpacking in the context of countryside engagements; the next step in this chapter's progression.

2.6 Theorising Cars and the Countryside

In this penultimate section I establish how using the car as an empirical lens ultimately locates the theoretical questions I have developed, about how rural space is practiced, within a context where they can be explored.

But initially a word needs be said about the rural in relation to the car *per se*, as there are two interrelated issues at stake. One is the absence of the car in existing rural research (which is coupled with an absence of rurality in studies of automobility that I attend to later in this section). The other issue is the way that the car fits uncomfortably as a means to explore rurality *per se*. Both of these issues arguably stem from enduring notions of idyllic (British) ruralities that serve to silence the car in subjective engagements with rural space. That the car for rural studies has been rendered unremarkable for so long is indicative of a field that has been constrained, unconsciously or otherwise, by the very cultural normativity of idyllic ruralities. But what is it about the car that engenders such friction with the idyllic notion of rurality? As a materiality of modernity that straddles high and low culture (Wollen and Kerr, 2002), the car is representative of progression, movement and man-power; arguably antithetical to discourses of rurality that perpetuate a pastoral, traditionalist and nature-driven environ. Of course such characterisations are objectifying too, though, as Cloke (2003*b*) emphasises, it is such reductionism to embedded cultural norms of rural that are 'inescapable'; reinforcing enduring objectifications of rurality and denying the purchase of mundane materialities that sit outside of dominant rural ideals. Thus, this to an extent can explain why rural studies literature offers little in terms of engaging critically with the car as a social or cultural phenomena integral to emerging

countryside engagement practices. Yet, as was explored in the opening chapter, the car has a long, complex cultural history entangled in the rise in popularity of engaging with British rural spaces (see, Matless, 1995). Thus, arguably the car's cultural disconnection from dominant discourses of rurality has been replicated in the rural studies literature, despite the embeddedness of automobilities in everyday rural engagements. Therefore the opportunity that this thesis takes is to open up space for exploring the purchase in taking a material lens that embodies a complex relationality to the rural. Moreover, there is a need to recognise that in adopting the car, this research embodies a shift change in the way that rural research agendas can empirically be realised.

In selecting the car, I draw on an emerging field of sociological and geographical research in the form of mobilities studies (see, Urry, 2000), as I scoped out within the thesis' opening chapter. Broadly speaking, cars, and more specifically their facilitation of automobilities, have received considerable critical attention in the past decade (see, for example, Urry and Sheller, 2000; Beckermann, 2001; Miller, 2001; Wollen and Kerr, 2002; Dant, 2004; Sheller, 2004; Laurier and Philo, 2003; Hagman, 2006; Urry, 2006; Bissell, 2007; Huijbens and Benediktsson, 2007; Laurier *et al*, 2008; Watts and Urry, 2008; Merriman, 2009; Cresswell, 2010), under the auspices of the emergent 'mobilities' field (see, Urry, 2007).

This automobilities literature serves to establish the richness of everyday practices of driving as sites for critical engagement. Several interconnected sub-fields within the automobilities literature can be identified which harbour a number of conceptual approaches and perspectives on the human-car relationship. Chiefly 'automobilities' is a field grounded in a sociological concern with the everyday movement enabled by the car; placing the basis of intellectual concern as the social phenomena of a 'mobile society' (Urry, 2000) and the system of automobility (Beckman, 2001). There are science and technology studies approaches that utilise ANT and Latour (for example, Laurier and Philo, 2003) and material culture perspectives on the car (Miller, 2001) and the historical (re)enchantments with the past temporalities of car use (Clarsen, 2000; 2008a; 2008b). Moreover, the more performance, phenomenology and practice-orientated perspectives emerged from theoretical beginnings (see, Sheller, 2004) and more latterly have emerged (see, for example, Laurier *et al*, 2008; Watts and Urry, 2008) as the field has developed its empirical foundations. In an insightful overview, Dant (2004) scopes out the various approaches that had been taken to understanding human-car relations, concluding that the phenomenological approach offers the most critical purchase to conceptualise the practice as one of the 'driver-car'.

Although there is a wealth of literature within the automobilities field, there is an overwhelming sociological focus, meaning only a handful of authors draw out key concepts that I find have leverage for my research. I want to note my earlier summation of the

literature – that is automobilities is overwhelmingly urban (exceptions being Huijbens and Benediktsson (2007) and Waitt and Lane (2007)) – to recognise that, although this is inherently the case, my concern in this section is less with the exception and contribution my conceptual framework makes to this field, rather the approaches and concepts I find useful for my research agenda. Phenomenological approaches to automobility clearly resonate with the conceptual framework developed above.

Most notably, Waitt and Lane (2007) demonstrate the critical value in theorising driving in spaces that are themselves complex constructed spaces both culturally, socially and physically, by piecing together a conceptual framework (akin to the approach I've adopted here). Waitt and Lane draw from empirical research into four-wheel drive tourists' perception of driving within the wilderness of the Kimberley region of northern Australia. The Kimberley as a national park offers a backdrop to the ethnographic 'tourist' performances; providing a research context that enables the authors' narratives to be attentive to the intricacies of thinking space as socially, culturally, subjectively and geographically produced (thus I draw comparisons with 'rural' space). The overwhelming value in this work is how it illustrates the purchase in adopting an embodied approach to understanding driving, and by extension, to understanding how places are produced. Their conceptual framework takes the gambits of non-representational theory as the point of departure from the existing literature, arguing that "non-representational theory applied to four-wheel touring practices makes it possible to incorporate embodied knowledge in thinking about place, [in] what we termed drivescapes" (Waitt and Lane, 2007: 167). For Waitt and Lane the relational production of space is conceived through non-representational theory (see Thrift, 2008). However, in the context of the rural space triad, I consider that non-representational approaches illuminate only part of the relational negotiation taking place when rural space is produced. Still, what Waitt and Lane demonstrate is, although they don't explicitly use the language, how focusing on a materially negotiated practice opens up conceptual ground for developing understandings of the production of space. For them their concern is the mediation of that (tourist) performance engendered by the car. But arguably, they equally could have focused on how the performance is spatialised through the medium of the car. It is the latter where I see potential to progress: cars (and their associated driving practices) offer rich empirical grounds for shaping spatial engagements, but in doing so are inherently bodily endeavours.

But there are other amenable concepts I can draw upon to develop understanding production of spatial engagements through the performance of car driving. The recognition that Dant (2004) gives to the phenomenological registers inherent in driving chimes with the theorisation of the everyday individual as experiencing the world always phenomenologically. I take from his work how the car itself should always be conceived as

entangled within the driver's operation of it; the 'driver-car' he terms offers a starting point to always remind of the inherent interconnectivity between materialities and the lived actuality of their use. Sheller (2004) presents the idea of cars being bound in their use by emotive registers, setting out how cars should be conceived as vestibules that individuals invest in emotionally. Bissell's (2010*b*) narrative describing bodies in motion through the notion of 'vibration' illustrates how the affective registers of the body are intimately entwined in vehicular movement. Arguably, these authors provide a language that enables me to connect thinking about practices phenomenologically through the empirical context of the car.

Collectively the authors that I note illustrate thinking through the car is inherently thinking through the body, and that consequently, the bodily encounter with space through the car is multifaceted in the mediation it engenders of the production of rural space. The car is a material medium that engages, enables and constrains the body in particularly situated dimensions.

2.7. Making Connections

Before I present the final section, it is useful to first take stock of the conceptual distance travelled above. To join these literatures together, I am making connections across conceptual fields, so that the space I initially opened up in interpreting Halfacree's triad can be empirically addressed. In progressing through from the triad to performance theory, the import of the body scale merges. But from taking the body as a phenomenological endeavour, the way in which rural space can be conceived as produced is theoretically expanded into embodied registers, sensibilities and experiences. To do this I utilise Ingold's concept of taskscape, which subsequently challenges the framework to think more broadly about how rural spaces are intersubjectively produced. I move into practice theory because (landscape) phenomenology doesn't provide the coherence across taskscapes that I argue is needed if rural space is to be empirically explored. In turning to Schatzkian Theories of Practice, specifically, I demonstrate that enmeshing taskscape with practice is an original intellectual endeavour that offers much potential to enrich both ontologies. Taskscapes can cohere as social practices, and the performative everyday actions that accrue as practice can be understood through pre-cognitive, embodied and sensual registers. The outcome is that interpreting Halfacree's triad of rural space as, in theory, phenomenologically practised, serves as a basis for formulating the thesis' research agenda. However, stemming from the Shovian school of Schatzkian practice theory is a critical body of work that demonstrates how practices are entwined with materialities, such that materialities can provide useful empirical lenses. The discussion then proposes to use the car as an empirical focus, which serves to make several further key original contributions. Firstly, in returning to Halfacree's

triad, I explore how the materiality of rural locale, can be augmented by the materiality of many other items, such that this vertex of the triad would be more usefully articulated as the materiality through which rural space is produced; recognising that this could be geographically rural space (but doesn't need to be) and/or any other material dimension that subjectively is negotiated in practice. Second, in adopting the car as key context, the thesis opens up the potential to contribute to the mobilities field, by identifying that this literature lacks attention to the car in rural contexts, again forging new intellectual connections through critical geographies and sociologies. Finally, through the discussion above of the empirical application of the car illustrates how the conceptual progression has culminated. To return to the notion of taskscape, the automobilities authors offer perspectives on the driver-car relation that that enmesh with conceiving (rural) space as inherently produced, routinely performed and socially practised, through phenomenological registers. However the automobilities literature extends this conception of spatial production by providing a material context (bodies and cars) through which rural space comes into (subjective) being. Attending to the bodily scale provides a multitude of conceptual tools that serve to draw out the tensions between the dimensions of rural space experienced in practice through negotiating the car's discourses and material tactility. Still, these connections and new opportunities the framework has worked through need consolidating and drawing together, in order that I can articulate how this thesis progresses.

2.7.1 Mobilising the Conceptual Framework

In this final section to the chapter I consolidate the critical path that I've established through the literature. It is here that I will demonstrate the purchase and nuance the conceptual framework holds, by detailing out the fundamental tenets it is based upon, as a foundation to go forward into the thesis. Until this point I have been concentrating on developing and layering the conceptual framework, but to progress into the thesis I intend to articulate in this section the theoretical framing with which I develop my thesis. Building the language for appropriation in the interpretation of empirical material is imperative here. I remain guided by the triad, since arguably it provides a framework for empirical exploration, but utilise its embellished and developed rendered that has been built through this discussion; as I consolidate below.

'Rural space', and particularly its production, is the central concern of my thesis. The construction of 'rural space' comes from recognising Halfacree's triad of rural space, which I position as offering an intricate foundation which I can build upon. The triad offers a means to move beyond dichotomous discussions of British rural spaces as either material ruralities or constructed imaginaries disconnected from lived realities of the rural. It does this through emphasising the everyday – the point of departure that I use as a foothold for

critical development. It is from this foothold on the importance of the everyday that I propose thinking the triad through a phenomenological rendering of the body. It is phenomenology that serves as a critical vein to entangle the lived, embodied dimensions of the subjective everyday in and amongst the dimensions of the triad. The conceptual framework moves beyond non-representational theory *per se*, by thinking phenomenologically. The intimate relationship between the dimensions of the triad continue to assert their tensions throughout the discussion, illustrating how each of the dimensions are of critical value to exploring how individuals (re)perform rural space in practice.

But in order to build on the everyday, it is imperative to the framework that space itself can be conceived as produced (Thrift, 2003*b*). I think it is useful to unpack ‘rural space’ a little further here before the thesis’ empirical discussion begins. To conceive of ‘rural space’ as produced should be understood in two interconnected tenets. Firstly, ‘rural space’ as produced in situ, the comprehension and engagement with the physical landscape of British rurality, as the subject defines it as so. And that’s a critical issue at stake for the research: the definition of space being rural should always be contextualised as produced by the subject. What does ‘rural space’ subjectively mean? My ‘rural space’ will differ, dramatically or subtly, depending on the social and cultural attitudes and values that I have, from that of anyone else. Culture, memory, bodies all define the parameters that enable each individual to construct their own version of ‘rural space’. Thus in short, ‘rural space’ is always inherently contingent. Secondly, and by extension, if ‘rural space’ is both contingent and produced, then the dimensions of geographical rural space can be imaginatively negotiated from anywhere. As multiple authors remind (Cloke, 1994; 2000; 2003*b*; Halfacree, 1993; 1994; 2003; Jones, 1995; Horton, 2008*a*; 2008*b*) negotiations of rural far extend geographical spaces of rurality. Thus productions of ‘rural space’ must also be performed indeterminately. This presents an interesting empirical challenge. If the theoretical concern is to progress beyond thinking rural spaces as dichotomous entities, this conclusion blurs how this can be empirically explored. One way to mitigate this, and to ensure a notional grip on performing rural space, arguably is to question its production within rural space *per se* (as individually and socially defined). On the basis of the first tenet, it’s clear that an ongoing dialogue with the subject needs to be established to position (and inevitably reposition) the notion of ‘rural space’ subjects produce. Through attentiveness to the nuances of subjective experience – arguably to the dimensions of subjective taskscapes – can the conceptualisation of ‘rural space’ be progressed. Furthermore, it is important to reaffirm therefore that an exploration of the production of rural space is inherently a geography of the subject; rather than a search for a ‘grand narrative’ to define the rural *per se*. Finally, the outcome of such theoretical questions is the need for an empirical approach to address the subjective scale.

Furthermore, in looking for an expressive language that captures the theoretical positioning of the body within the lived everyday I am moved to adopt unpacking the conceptual triad through ‘relationality’. Blackman and Venn (2010) detail how focusing on bodies necessitates conceptualising the ‘relationality’ inherent between them, other bodies and material stuff they interact with. In their description of ‘relationality’ they confirm the conceptual fluidity that the expression offers:

‘This paradigm of co-enactment, co-emergence and co-evolution assumes from the outset that we are dealing with thoroughly entangled processes that require a different analytic and conceptual language to examine. ... Like affect, relationality is a term produced differently depending upon the particular theoretical position being enacted’ (Blackman and Venn, 2010: 10).

Relationality is the key between the dimensions of Halfacree’s triad. Whilst it is useful to further develop what can be understood by each vertex, it is only through the enduring tensions between entities that rural space is subjectively produced. Moving forward, therefore, conceives rural space should be to be always attempting to grapple with the interactions, (dis)connections and frictions between the dynamics of the conceptual triad, at least as much as engaging with the entities composing it.

From the automobilities literature I take how material dimensions of cars embellish the practice of everyday life in situated and nuanced ways. I distil this mindful of the conceptual triad for understanding rural space and how it can be holistically negotiated through the lens of the car. The literature offers a means to conceptualise the subject-car relation, through Dant’s (2004) notion of ‘driver-car’. I find this has particular purchase in establishing the interconnectivity between the subject performing driving and the material role of the car. In the thesis this notion forms the backdrop to the conceptual development made because of its simplicity an enduring reminder of the interconnectivity between the body and the stuff it interacts with (or in ‘triad’ terms – the ‘lived experience’ of everyday and the ‘material’ dimension to rural space).

Finally, as a basis for all conceptualisation of the subject I continue to return to the foundational tenets sourced from landscape phenomenology. ‘Taskscape’, particularly, is powerful in the conceptualisation of the subject in the world that it engenders. The world of the ‘taskscape’ is inherently relational, negotiated between the senses, the sensibilities and histories that occupy the subject in the moment of comprehension of the world. Every perception through this concept is ephemeral, yet endures through the vestibule of the body; in memory and yet in the moment too. In short, landscape phenomenology enriches the expressive language and conceptual depth that the subject performing engagements with rural space can be conceived through.

From herein, the thesis begins to unfold using this conceptual framework. In the next chapter I turn attention to unpacking how the thesis was empirically realised. It is through discussion that continues to return to this theoretical basis that the methodological framework is developed, detailed and critically reflected upon. From there the thesis, as outlined in the introduction, offers four substantive chapters of analysis, before concluding. In the conclusion, entitled Rural, many of the foundational tenets established within this Read/Reworked chapter are again taken up and consolidated in terms of how the empirical material enables their critical progression.

. 3 .

RUDIMENTS & ROUTINES

3.1 Establishing the Approach

“practice approaches promulgate a distinct social ontology: the social is a field of embodied, materially interwoven practices centrally organised around shared practical understandings” (Schatzki, 2001: 3).

Schatzki’s social ontology presents a methodological challenge. Schatzki’s assertion above positions the comprehension and comportment of the everyday at the intersection of bodies, actions and conceptualised meanings. In highlighting how social meaning is situated in the doing of everyday lives, and theorising the social field as itself produced through complex nexuses of performances that constitute social practices, Schatzkian Practice Theory presents challenges for the way that geographers can empirically engage with the social. I begin by reasserting the theoretical backdrop, since this provides the foundation from which the methodological approach propagated. The endeavour for this research methodology is to engage with everyday social life in a way that can attend to the interconnected and interdependent dimensions Schatzkian Theories of Practice contends as constitutive of the social realm. It is through theorising ‘the rural’ as practiced, and driving the countryside as a means to engage with a practicing of the rural, that a qualitative framework of methods was selected; substantiated herein.

In cognate disciplines, the methodological challenge Theories of Practice presents has been recognised (Martens, 2012) but attempts to refine a qualitative approach to Practice have been empirical in response, not borne out of a critique of established qualitative methods. Arguably, the challenge is rooted in theoretical problematisation Practice Theory enables of established qualitative approaches. Theories of Practice offer opportunity for questioning the limits of dominant qualitative methods on theoretical grounds, in light of how Schatzkian ontology positions language. One of the key tenets of a practice approach is that language is positioned as only a small part of the social realm:

“actions are continually perpetuating and extending practices temporally. The actions involved ... are bodily doings and sayings. Bodily doings and sayings are actions that people directly perform ... sayings need not involve language” (Schatzki, 2002: 72).

Aspects of practice are embedded in tacit, haptic and bodily registers, and, as Schatzki notes here, are not necessarily verbal; embodied actions form an integral part of social practice alongside the literal. Thus in being interested in the performative dimensions of engaging

with rural space, it's the 'doings and sayings' of driving that equally required unpacking to explore what car use means as an encounter with the countryside. Moreover, problematising language draws from wider shifts in the discipline that emerge from 'non-representational' approaches (see, Crang, 2005).

Thus addressing the research questions resulted in shaping the fieldwork to engage with individual narratives of driving performance in rural spaces, with how these are mediated by, and productive of, particular forms of social practice. Three questions were used to steer the enquiry:

1. *How are 'rural' discourses performed in rural space?*
2. *How are these performances of rural engagement materially negotiated?*
3. *How do individuals engage with the countryside through their vehicles – e.g on a Sunday drive, an auto-tour or a mundane commute?*

From this final question, several sub-questions focused attention on the key dimensions to explore: how is the car engaged with in rural space?; what does the car facilitate in terms of rural engagement?; and, how are other performances integral to using the car in this context? Questions one and two aimed to generate data on the material dimension of performing rural engagement and how 'rural' discourses shape those performances within rural spaces. Question three was more directly concerned with the empirical focus on the car, with sub-questions that aim to generate data on the material car, whilst asking what the car affords in terms of mobility. These research questions capture the geographic scale of enquiry by focusing on the individual's experience in the context of broader social practices (through reference to 'performance') and discourses.

Consequently I find it problematic to turn to a qualitative methods toolbox that is preoccupied with articulating the experiential in language (see, Crang, 2002). Focus groups and interviews, for example, provide data that, although may engage participants in reflection on their body, arguably is articulated through 'sayings', impeded by expression. Participants may discuss their 'doings' but arguably always through their conscious engagement and comprehension of them. Articulating 'doings' occurs through constraints: the social parameters of the narrative exchange; the scope of the question or discussion; the self-reflexivity that people can exhibit to the researcher in conversation. Whilst these approaches are certainly useful for developing understandings, the consequence is that researched phenomena are explored through words.

Ten years ago Mike Crang (2003: 501) made the call for qualitative methods to "push further into the felt, touched and embodied dimension of knowledge", to expand engagement with the corporeal in geographic research. Ten years later, his call still resounds, and the dimensions of methodological development have begun to expand. Several geographers of late have illustrated how when qualitative methods move away from a static

linguistic exchange new understandings can be developed (Urry and Büscher, 2009; Fincham *et al*, 2010; Laurier *et al*, 2008; Simpson, 2011; Spinney, 2011). The mobilities turn (see, Urry, 2007) has presented opportunities to diversify the methodological terrain too, as Büscher *et al*'s (2011) edited collection of various video, sound and visual methods captures.

A methodological approach that offered a way to overcome some of the initial concerns about a focus on language was required. I was mindful of calls for geographers to explore using video (Kinsman, 2009), and aware of video methods being successfully integrated in sociological studies, for example, by Ruth Holiday (2000) and Sarah Pink (2001). But these approaches relied on video being used to make participant diaries, which is an approach that did not fully address the concern about qualitative approaches reliant on literal language. Videoing within the car, however, provided a way to research participants' performances, not their narratives, and traverse some of the qualitative critique. Using video technology presented a means to capture individuals' movement, positioning and driving competence, with the creation of video-data providing a subjective perspective on rural engagement, beyond my own; a form of mediated observation.

In recent years there has been increased interest in conducting geographical research that adopts video methods as part of the data collection (see, Laurier, 2010; Laurier and Philo, 2006; Laurier *et al*, 2008; Simpson, 2011; Spinney, 2011). This literature informs my research design. Filming methods are increasingly being utilised in geographic research to capture 'naturalistic film-data' (see, Laurier and Philo, 2006), but also to explore qualitative methodological practice (Simpson, 2010). In cognate disciplines, guides for their use have recently been published (Heath *et al*, 2010; Haw and Hadfield, 2011). There are calls in the literature for geographers to conduct qualitative methods 'creatively' (Latham, 2003), and for geographical research to explore film-making options (Holiday, 2000), with texts highlighting videoing as a methodological approach for researching mobile contexts (see, for discussion, Fincham *et al*, 2010). Looking across these emergent works, several facets of the varied approaches resonated with how my approach developed, which I narrate in the subsequent discussion below.

As this chapter unfolds it continues to expand on these opening contentions in order to provide an account of the approach I took to develop this thesis. In exploring the methodological approach taken to develop data I aim to illuminate how the findings have emerged, whilst critically engaging with the assumptions, decisions and practical approach that I adopted in the use of each method. Next, I explain my approach to analysis before a reflexive and evaluative discussion of the methodological approach follows, with specific attention to the video method genesis. In the concluding remarks I summarise the critical distance covered across the chapter and indicate the implications for the thesis ahead.

3.2 Methodological Framework

From recognising the above methodological challenge out of Theories of Practice, the research adopted a range of qualitative methods to generate a deliberate bricolage of data to explore the research questions. This assortment of methods included focus groups, in-depth interviews, some (auto)ethnographic reflection and videos of rural drives being made by participants. In total, data for the thesis comprises two focus groups, eighteen in-depth semi-structured interviews, five participants' videos of their countryside driving, along with five follow-up interviews. Collectively these methods generated twenty-five transcripts of interviews, ranging from forty minutes to nearly three hours in duration, and approximately eleven hours of video footage. Overall the research engaged with twenty-nine participants from various socio-economic, ethnic, age, gender and locales (a summary of whom is contained in Appendix A). The research approach was augmented by ethnographic reflection in my field diary. In this approach, video data has equivalent authority as the data generated through the more traditional qualitative methods.

Notably, in order to progress the research agenda, the methodological approach adopted was submitted for ethical review during the Upgrade process and therefore prior to the commencement of any fieldwork, in accordance with The University of Sheffield Ethics Approval Procedure. As Dowling (2005: 20) describes of such committees, 'it is useful to consider such formal guidelines as a first step in thinking though the social context of your research'; to which I would extend that the 'thinking through' was embedded throughout the *doing* of the research too. By engaging with the ethical dimensions of the proposed research agenda prior to the start of fieldwork, a Research Participant Information Sheet, Videoing Participant Information Sheets and consent forms (see, for examples, *Methodological Appendix*) were developed that detailed the implications of participation in the research project, the process for informed consent and the way in which data generated through the project would be handled. That the research had been granted ethical approval was communicated to all participants verbally, and through the research materials that were produced.

In the discussion that unfolds below, I briefly re-state the research questions and note the field site before illustrating and critically engaging with the methods used and the overall approach adopted. I first consider the geographical locale the research took place within, then, taking each method in turn, I detail how each was employed in a structure that echoes the chronological progression of the data collection.

3.2.1 The Fieldwork Site

The research fieldwork was conducted in the rural areas of Derbyshire, United Kingdom. Selecting a location with indeterminate boundaries to the 'rural' area was purposeful. This

allowed the research field to have (subjective) porous borders on what is determined ‘rural’. Derbyshire offers a broad spectrum of land types – for example, rural, semi-rural, suburban or urban (for categorisation see, DEFRA, 2004 *cited from* Commission for Rural Communities, 2007: 3)– and thus varied residential and recreational contexts too. Moreover, the Peak District National Park boundary falls rather centrally to the county, delimiting an area as formally endorsed ‘rural space’ under the auspices of the Peak District National Park Authority. As I explored in the introduction to the thesis, the area embodies a rich social, cultural and political heritage that is inherently embedded in the rural landscape individuals can engage with. The critically important dimension for the research questions is that the fieldwork area offered variety in land use because it provides scope to explore with participants their definition of rural space across an area that itself has various social, cultural and statutory boundaries defining its status.

Geographically, rural Derbyshire offers an excellent site for the research since it is highly frequented rural space. The Peak District and surrounding rural periphery is flanked by urban centres to the East (Sheffield), South (Derby, Nottingham) and North West (Manchester), with trunk roads criss-crossing the area (see, *Figure 1.4*). It is also home to two famous road stretches, which add to the driving heritage of this rural space: the A57 ‘Snake Pass’ is a main route between Sheffield and Manchester; the A456 ‘Cat and Fiddle’ between Buxton and Macclesfield is equally renowned in driving enthusiast communities. As I identified in the introduction, this rural area is accessible to over 15.7 million people in one hour’s car journey (Peak District National Park, 2006) and cars are the way that eighty-five percent of visitors access the Peak District National Park (*ibid.*). As a rural space where the car is functionally integral, both in terms of resident car use and transient tourist traffic flows, it is an ideal environment within which to explore the research questions that require the performance of rural driving to be ‘everyday’, in the form of “Sunday drive[s], an auto-tour[s] or a mundane commute[s]”.

Methodologically, situating the research wholly in Derbyshire enabled an in-depth period to be spent engaging with the one area. The area was already familiar from previous fieldwork in this location (Emeny, 2008; 2009) and from living in the vicinity. On a practical level, an understanding of the locale facilitated the research in key ways that I reflect on in discussion of the ethnographic approach below. As the research intentionally included a strand of ethnographic reflection, a familiarity with the space was conceptually useful. Beginning to think critically about the mundane spaces of the ‘rural’ that I frequent was productive; as I go on to discuss in the next section.

3.2.2 *Ethnographic Approach*

The ethnographic approach to the research was adopted from the outset as it was clear that much could be gained, conceptually and empirically, from critically reflecting on the everyday driving that I was doing for the research project. I should note at the outset, the fieldwork didn't include autoethnography, or an ethnography *per se*, rather drew on the principles of working ethnographically in qualitative research (see, Jackson, 2000). Following Sarah Pink's (2009) claim that ethnography can engage with multisensory registers, the ethnographic dimension offered gains in conceptualising through my body how I negotiate rural driving, which in turn informed the questions I could formulate to generate empirical data about others' embodied experiences.

I am mindful of Cook *et al*'s (2005) call to position oneself, in relation to the research agenda, then attempt to 'decentre' that position in the narrative. Consequently, my positionality is a key starting point to framing my ethnographic approach and subsequent reflections. As I am a resident of a DEFRA (2004 *cited from* Commission for Rural Communities, 2007: 3) certified 'semi-rural' area of mid-Derbyshire, often when I get in the car I can find myself on an archetypal 'rural' lane. It is imperative that I acknowledge how the fieldwork location is inherently entangled in my own car biography too. As I noted above, this was a conscious decision. I considered being familiar with the research area an advantage in two key ways. Firstly, it was useful in terms of researcher performance. In carrying out the research, conversations with participants were lubricated when I could perform 'local', geographical understanding of the roads and places they'd discuss. Being local, knowing where participants were talking about reinforced trust in my interest in their rural driving. I reflect on this as researcher performance, however, as it soon became apparent the value that 'localness' held since if even if I didn't know where somewhere or some roads were, I would act as though I did to replicate that 'local' researcher identity. The second advantage was conceptual: in challenging my mundane driving as an experience and production of the 'rural', I could focus critical attention on the theoretical, rather than being impeded by uncertainties in interpreting new landscapes constantly (that's not to say I didn't find new roads, or indeed I found these instances of unfamiliarity useful also). By bringing into question the road spaces that I had (up until the inception of this research agenda) taken for granted, what was habituated space became fertile conceptual ground to cover as the research progressed (and continues to do so).

In order to maintain an ethnographic approach throughout the fieldwork, I kept scratch and field notes in a field diary. This was often done whilst pulled over in a lay by or car park, because this was the most practical option since I was frequently on the move driving to the various locations of data collection. I recorded critical reflection on conducting the research, entangled within theoretical and experiential musings about driving in the

countryside. I also ruminated on the passengering that I was doing, questioning the motivations, geographies and embodied experiences afforded by each car-shaped engagement with the countryside. In practice there was a lot more driving done than critical progress detailed in my field diary, as I had to be pragmatic with the everyday nature of the countryside driving that I was doing. Ultimately, the field diary formed a source of project organisation and critical reflection that I did not intend to formally code or digitise. In typing up the scratch and field notes I would have lost the immediacy and provisionality that the field diary's notes encompass. I seldom returned to the notes during the analysis process, since the diary entries formed part of a conceptual progression that I remained mindful of through the interpretative analyses. When I did return to the diary notes, it was to develop understandings of concepts that were initially developed within it. Also, owing to the approach taken to analyse the other data (thematic, as I discuss in the following section), I did not hold onto the reflections I had noted, instead connecting through emergent themes from participants' data back through my noted ideas, if and when that occurred. Thus, using the field diary as a conceptual space supported the research progression analytically, rather than contributing data in itself.

Moreover, the ethnographic approach, learning from Pink (2009), actively animated the way in which I engaged with doing the research. I was mindful of the 'haptic' registers (Paterson, 2009) that I could route my experience and engagements dually through – conceiving my performance as through Ingold's (1993; 2001) notion of taskscape. Parked in lay-bys, I would take out my camera and not move from the driving seat capturing photographs of the interventions of the car in the landscape, visualising conceptual ideas. What this served to highlight was both the subjectivity in locating 'the field' (see, Hyndman, 2001) and at once the value in working with images (see, Lorimer, 2003) in ethnographic practice.

A discrete discussion of the ethnographic approach to the methodology is, however, somewhat problematic. I am acutely aware that the ethnographic engagement with the rural did not cease once I completed the other data collection. Each time I drive my car, and especially when I find myself navigating countryside lanes, the perpetuation of the conceptual and embodied reflection continues: the enduring performance of driving offers imaginative and practiced space to develop insights further. Such experience embodies arguments for the porosity of the field (Hyndman, 2001) and echoes the difficulties one can have in situating oneself in relation to a research agenda (Rose, 1997), since the research agenda inescapably endures in my driving performances where I conceptualise rural space to be.

3.2.3 Focus Groups

Focus groups were intended to access public discourse around the themes of the research, as initially this was conceptualised as useful to answer the research questions (although in practice I found this to not be the case, as I shall shortly explain). Focus groups were chosen to put people into conversation about their use of cars in the countryside to address research questions one and two, and provide some data for research question three also.

The research data collection began with a pilot focus group. I began with a focus group because I felt this method was an appropriate starting point to act as a barometer on the concepts that the research aimed to engage participants in conversation about. The recruitment for this was based upon identifying who key stakeholders may be in relation to rural road spaces and accessing them through personal networks. This approach formed the basis of the pilot focus group, where participants were mixed-age, mixed socio-economic background and had varying engagements with the car (for participants, see *Methodological Appendix*). The themes for discussion were developed from initial ethnographic reflections and emergent themes from the literature, developing a schedule (see, Cameron, 2005). This enabled the pilot to explore which aspects of individuals' biographies were foremost in shaping driving on the rural roads.

Following the pilot focus group there were several key reflections that informed the subsequent data collection. Firstly, although it may initially appear obvious, older participants had more of a car biography to discuss. Engaging with a cross-section of ages would be a productive approach for further recruitment to capture a varied extent of rural driving biographies. Secondly, the pilot focus group brought together people who had differing engagements with cars, roads and driving. The result of this was that some characteristics emerged as more potent than others in terms of generating data about rural driving. For example, Anne and Ed identified how rural driving can be shaped by children's age. Consequently, I opted to talk further with parents and actively aimed to recruit them to participate. Yet when Drew (a Roads Engineer) seldom offered reflections developed through his professional training, it became clear how participants might not connect their driving biographies with their various subject positions. By comparison, Will quickly identified his position as a cyclist. But Will's narrative was insightful on how his experience driving on rural roads was simultaneously conceptualised through his cycling biography; highlighting the value in recruiting people who may have other uses of rural roads as well as driving them. Furthermore, the discussion illuminated recreational identities that potentially had purchase. There were long soliloquies in this pilot group from Ed, who identified as a car-enthusiast. Ed's animated narrative conveyed the relation he expressed to his cars, and their countryside use, emphasising how important it was for the research to engage with more car enthusiasts to harness more car-body-countryside data.

Consequently, I did exploratory research into social groups based in the research area that I considered would provide recruitment environments for further focus groups. Having learned from the pilot focus group how age could be an important consideration, I began by attending a group for retired people living in Sheffield in order to recruit participants with long car biographies. I negotiated access via email and telephone correspondence with the Chair of the group, and subsequently attended the informal monthly coffee morning to get talking with people about my research. Presenting a ‘lay’ (Crouch, 2000) description of my research, using my research leaflets (see, *Appendix A*), I successfully arranged a focus group between five participants. I also recruited two other participants for in-depth interviews. The topics for focus group discussion were the same as the pilot focus group (see, *Appendix A*).

The outcome of the second focus group was a productive generation of data around issues that relate to rural driving, but a frustrating lack of depth on individual biographies given the number of participants. The participants could talk individually about their long driving careers, but their shared perspectives and reliance on public discourse to make collective connections was too broad for the research questions. The key difference from the pilot focus group was that participants of the second focus group were performing particular positionalities within the social dynamic of the group. Despite attentiveness to facilitating the conversation, following Cameron (2005), the subject matter of the research questions emerged as too personal for the focus group format. It was clear that the focus group environment was not suited to exploring embodied dimensions of engaging with rural space through the car, because the social dynamics of the group did not lend themselves to generating a conversation where people were willing to talk about their bodies in-depth. Though the focus group provided useful insights into the sociological dimensions, I decided the lack of embodied reflection it generated would negate the value of holding further focus groups.

In summary, the focus groups demonstrated that the identities individuals constructed around their car biography were key; be that, for example ‘parent’, ‘cyclist’ or ‘enthusiast’. These facets that were attached to the ‘driver’ identity served as the interesting dimensions to diversify the participant recruitment. Maintaining the intention to recruit individuals with varied car biographies, around these three key markers, along with a varied age range, became the approach. Thus, the focus groups illustrated which kinds of narratives would be most productive for data generation through other methods. Moreover, although initially intended as only a pilot, the subsequent re-evaluation of the method means that pilot stands as data of equal value to the other focus group, since both informed later fieldwork.

3.2.4 Interviewing

Interviewing enables the researcher to explore the participant's ideas, values and sentiments and is often a form of interaction that lends itself well to asking awkward questions (see, Hitchings, 2012), as there is a degree of intimacy in the conversation act that can engender trust. Interviews were conducted because they offer a means to engage people directly in conversation about their own subjective performances. Given that research question three was directly concerned with notions of embodiment in relation to the car, I considered the in-depth interview the ideal approach to try to get people to unpack their perceptions of their driving body.

The recruitment of interviewees began by presenting the research to organised groups. Groups I contacted to recruit participants included a car enthusiast club, an environmental action organisation and a cycling club. These groups were chosen as members were using the roads in and around the Peak District National Park and Derbyshire regularly, but they were also organisations that gave members an additional identity that may have shaped their engagement with rural space through the car. Typically access would be negotiated through contacting one of the key gatekeepers – chair, organiser or personal contact from the club – to arrange attendance at a group meeting where the research was briefly introduced. Initial conversations were facilitated through these informal presentations, but also leaflets and more formal research information sheets (see, *Methodological Appendix*). Research information leaflets were developed as a softer, tourist-attraction style leaflet that summarised the research. The leaflets provided my contact details and signposted the project website I had constructed. The project website was used to aid participant recruitment, since the site detailed further information about the project than I could initially convey and could be accessed at (potential) participants' convenience. The presentation of the work always generated a lot of conversation, which I subsequently noted in my field diary. The combination of leaflet, website and talking to people was very effective at engaging people from only having a brief moment to speak with them. I recruited a several participants from each group by taking contact details, then agreeing a time and place for interview following subsequent correspondence. My success rate was high, with only a few intended participants not successfully recruited.

Over the life-course of the fieldwork, the recruitment strategy evolved. Initially recruitment leads were nurtured through snowballing from participants' contacts, though I also used personal networks. Working through friends and colleagues, participants whose narrative of countryside driving could augment the research data were recruited. Adopting such an approach has the advantage of being able to build on initial rapports, draw on the contacts of peers and recruitment through snowball techniques. This approach was effective for this research agenda as the research did not intend to produce data from a representative

sample that could be generalised. The conceptual framework positions the subjectivity of the individual as paramount, meaning each participant was contributing their biography from their inherently situated positionality, drawing on Haraway (1988). The range of respondents derived in this way fits with the conceptual basis for the research questions. Moreover, however familiar or unfamiliar I was with each participant, accessing their narrative of countryside driving was the priority, and familiarity in some ways allowed me to dig deeper into the embodied dimensions of their driving because there was already an established rapport and trust. As can be seen from the matrix of participant characteristics in *Appendix One*, the research included a cross-section of individuals with varying residential, socio-economic, cultural, life-stage and driving capabilities. The participants recruited could be broadly characterised as those able to afford a private vehicle, which had a purpose for automobility in rural space and a normative conceptualisation of ‘rural’ discernible in initial discussions. The individuals whom the research recruited were selected as they offered a subjective perspective on rural driving that differed from other participants by their residential location, access to and frequency of driving, occupation, age, gender, ethnic background and life choices. Such a plethora of characteristics were sought to generate empirical material from a diversified spectrum of experiential contexts.

By conducting in-depth, semi-structured interviews, data was generated for the first three research questions. To guide the conversations I developed an interview schedule (see, *Methodological Appendix*) incorporating open ended questions and common probing techniques to guide the conversation but not lead it (see, Dunn, 2005). The method’s ability to generate trust was a key advantage, as through the interview I developed the questions, ‘funneling’ (*ibid.*) towards getting participants to think about their driving bodies in relation to the countryside. Interviews ranged from forty minutes to over two hours in duration. In total eighteen initial in-depth interviews were conducted with twenty-two participants as I opted to interview some couples together, recognising that there can be much value in doing so (Valentine, 1999). Couples interviews were productive as data captured their shared car-biographies and enabled exploration of where their narratives of rural engagement were disparate and/or intertwined. Often interviews were conducted in participants’ homes, but some participants were interviewed in work places, coffee shops and restaurants due to time and work constraints, or participant preference. Participants were recruited and interviewed from across a wide geographical area; stretching from Buxton in the west, to near Alfreton in the south of Derbyshire, up to the Hope Valley in the North and various locations across Sheffield to the east. Exploring ideas around countryside driving from participants based across this wide geographical area enabled the research to transcend the urban, suburban, semi-rural and rural categorisations of space (to draw on DEFRA, 2004 *cited from* Commission for Rural Communities, 2007: 3) and harness interview data from across a

spectrum of geographical contexts. To engage with how countryside driving is negotiated in varying, situated contexts, the research needed to engage with a cross-section of people who might be accessing the space more or less frequently; hence the interviewees range from living in the urban centre of Sheffield to the rural locales of the Peak District.

Although the research is guided by questioning the efficacy of qualitative methods for an agenda concerned with the embodied scale, I recognised that interviewing offers a means to engage in relevant talk (see, Hitchings, 2012). Interviewing is an important part of the methodological framework that provides data which underpins the more experimental data collection. I adopted this approach because it was the most effective way to engage people in the themes that the research aimed to explore. Interviewing provided a strong foundation of material to build on with the other methods. But more than empirically, interviewing provided a social foundation, a means to establish productive field relations with participants in order to recruit them for video methods, if appropriate. By talking with participants face to face I could capture their narrative of countryside driving, but also get a sense of their attitude to the research by meeting them and sharing a conversation. Semi-structured interviews captured a wealth of in-depth data, both in terms of the stories told about countryside driving, and also the way in which they were told. For example, David talked very nervously about his countryside driving citing a series of speeding fines that had left him in conflict with the new label of criminal to his driving performance. The research interview offers far more scope to holistically reflect on the research performance and the participant's role within the research through being there in person. I noted in my field diary participants' body language, the non-verbal cues, the way in which the narrative was expressed and the setting that the interview was taking place in, making scratch notes during the interview and more detailed field notes post-interviewing. Finally, I conducted interviews in this way (face-to-face) to establish who could potentially be recruited to make video data too.

3.2.5 Participant Video Making and Post-Videoing Interviews

In this research, video methods are about generating data to address the substantive research questions, whilst exploring the method as a means to engender more embodied reflections from participants on their driving performances. The method was conceived as part of the research design as a means to generate research data that goes beyond what individual participants articulate about their performances of driving, to capture their performances in practice. As I discussed in the opening of this chapter, the creation of video data emerged from theoretical problematisation of the data that other qualitative methods can produce and an aspiration to build on my previously productive video methods experience (Emeny, 2009).

For this research design, the most noteworthy research using video methods is Laurier *et al*'s 'Habitable Cars' project (Laurier *et al*, 2008; Laurier, 2010). This work sets out a methodological precedent for videoing in cars that was used as a guide for the practical execution of the video data collection (discussed below). However, Laurier, *et al*'s, use of video did not stem from the same theoretical motivation but was instead situated within an ethnomethodological approach (see, Heath *et al*, 2010). In the Habitable Cars project, the researchers collected the video data and analysed it separately from the participants, positioning the role of video data in their research design as a form of mediated observation for conversation-analytic analysis. I conceived that I could use the video as a mediated observation too (like Laurier and Simpson) to begin to analytically unpack and edit video data. But, if that had remained the only engagement with the video participants produced, then it would have been problematic for this research design, as the research intended to explore embodied dimensions of rural engagement. Video would represent rural driving performances; performances that are inherently subjective and situated in their experience of rural space. Within the developed research agenda, my interpretation of the embodied engagement the videoed subjects portrayed could only go so far, since to do so would have been inherently objectifying their performances. An ethnomethodological analysis of the video would have conflicted with the theoretical rationale for developing video methods too, since ethnomethodology is concerned with a conversation-analytic approach. To return to the chapter's opening contention, the research methodology needed to prioritise engaging with 'doings and sayings' (Schatzki, 2001) of rural automobility performances. The opportunity I theorised video as offering was to engage participants in conversation about their performances depicted in the video data they had each produced. To not engage participants in their video productions would be missing an opportunity, since video offers potential to 'look alongside' (Kinsman, 2000) those researched.

The proliferation of video methods in geographical research illustrates the current interest in exploring the potential for video data (see, Laurier *et al*, 2008; Laurier and Philo, 2008; Laurier, 2010; Garrett, 2011; Merchant, 2011; Simpson, 2011; Spinney, 2011; Erwein, 2013; Harada and Waite, forthcoming). Since the inception of this design, a handful of studies have begun to emerge that use video critically. For example, Simpson (2010) uses static cameras whilst doing ethnography (street performing) for generating video data as a form of mediated observation and aide memoir of the passing public. Harada and Waite's (forthcoming) approach is more mobile, in conducting 'go-alongs' using video cameras to record car commuters. Merchant (2011), who explored ocean diving performances, and Erwein (2013), who focused on practices of urban allotment gardening are further examples of video methods' integration into qualitative geographical research.

It is from recognising the inherent inequality between a researcher and researched that the method developed a further fieldwork endeavour to reduce the conceived objectification that can result from analysis of video material. In a similar vein to Merchant (2011), who explored ocean diving performances, and Erwein (2013), who focused on practices of urban allotment gardening, I too wanted to show participants their videoed performances in order that they could reflect on their embodied experiences from viewing themselves conducting rural driving *in situ*. I theorised that this form of elicitation – taking the participants’ video data back to them for a follow-up interview – would generate more responses that engaged with their embodied driving performances. Merchant’s (2011) research made videos underwater of diving as a means to connect participants to their bodily performances in water and then showed the video (unedited) back to participants in a collective, focus-group format. Similarly, but first editing the footage, Erwein (2013) used video in follow-up focus groups to elicit further discussion on the performances of urban gardening. There is a key distinction to draw out from these authors, however as whilst their approaches worked particularly well for these social activities (where participants were performing diving and gardening collectively) as the focus-groups could discuss their own performances amongst the group, driving on the other hand was videoing in private cars, leading to data that was much more focused on the individual performing the drive (along with any passengers that may have accompanied them). As I theorised at the outset of the research, giving participants voice to explore their performing bodies as they conduct habituated practices is an invaluable augmentation for video data’s efficacy in a methodological framework. The approach can be characterised using Haw and Hadfield’s (2011) modalities as between ‘extractive’ and ‘reflective’.

In practice, the video method used two video cameras set up within participants’ cars. Laurier, *et al*, (Laurier *et al*, 2008; Laurier, 2010) make use of available technologies to generate video data using two video cameras one facing outwards and one recording the interior, and so I adapted their set-up for this research (with some camera configuration differences, see, *Methodological Appendix*). Following Laurier, *et al*, (*ibid.*) in using a standard video camera on the car dashboard, encased in foam, with a fish-eye lens affixed, video was generated capturing participants’ interaction(s) within the car as they drove through the landscape (see, *Figure 3.1*). To move beyond simply focusing on interpersonal interactions in the car, I also mounted a camera to simultaneously video the view looking out at the road from inside the car (see, *Figure 3.2*). Participants were given explanatory materials and an introduction to the cameras’ set up, so that data from different participants could be generated that was broadly comparable in format. Overall this worked very effectively: firstly, because the instructions were clear and simple to follow; secondly, the materials used (for example, the foam) were easy to manipulate to fit each car interior. The



Figure 3.1: Internal Camera Set-up (*Photograph Author's Own*)



Figure 3.2: External Camera Set-up (*Photograph Author's Own*)

method produced two films that simultaneously captured data of each participant's rural drive.

Recruitment for the video methods participation transpired from the in-depth interviews. When participants were particularly engaged with the themes of comfort and car-body-rural road relations, I would ask them after the interview if they would make videos of their drives. There were two main reasons for this approach. Firstly, I was being strategic in my selection of video-making participants so as to ensure that, following making videos, the conversation with the video as elicitation to be productive. One way of guaranteeing success for that stage was by only selecting participants that had delivered in-depth data in the semi-structured interview stage. Secondly, there needed to be a degree of trust between the participants and researcher in order for the video-making method to be agreed to. I used the initial interview to develop a rapport with participants, to narrow the gap between them and by me reinforcing how valid their input was. All of these consciously employed tactics worked to bring participants into the video making enthusiastically, and with greater understanding of the purpose. Each participant was asked to sign a video methods consent form and made aware that they would be identifiable in the video data, although would be given a pseudonym.

Post-videoing interviews (herein 'PVI') with participants who generated video data took place a couple of weeks after the video data was returned. This time lag was to enable familiarisation with the content, initial analysis and editing of video data into formats that were easily navigable for the interview. To conduct an effective PVI it was imperative that I understood the data holistically, in order to present it most effectively to the participant. I designed an interview schedule to enable a semi-structured conversation for the PVI (see *Methodological Appendix*). Each PVI began with discussion on what the participants thought of the method in practice; for future refinement of the method and to provide an account of their 'orientation' to the cameras, as suggested by Heath *et al* (2010). Then, selected extracts would be shown to initiate discussion on driving performance and embodied negotiation of the rural landscape through the car (to directly address research question three). Each interview schedule was embellished with participant-specific questions that had emerged from watching their video data. The PVIs conducted were on average one hour in duration. I approached post-videoing interviews with more attention to evaluation from the earliest stage, given the experimental nature of the method. Therefore after each post-filming interview, contextual musings, feelings and reflections on the process were diligently recorded in my field diary, in order to refine my research performance (and the method *per se*) for the next post-videoing interview.

3.3 Approach to Analyses

In this section I describe and critically reflect on the processing of the research data, how it was analysed and detail the decisions that ensued for the analysis of the video data. Broadly, the data analysis was facilitated by NVivo8 Computer Aided Qualitative Design Software (CAQDAS). The use of NVivo8 defined the way that the data was processed and handled; for example ensuring video extracts were small enough file sizes to integrate and that transcripts were typed for import into the software.

3.3.1 Data administration

I completed all transcription for the research as soon as possible after the time at which the data had been collected. Digital audio recordings of each focus group, interview and post-videoing interview were made, using two Dictaphones to ensure effective recordings were obtained. The audio-data was backed up in several physical drives for data security, using the anonymous participant number to store the data. Using Express Scribe, with a foot-pedal, transcripts were made from the audio recordings. The focus groups and each of the in-depth interviews were transcribed verbatim, with omissions from transcription made only when the participant was discussing extraneous topics from the research questions. For example, Bill and Angie often discussed everyday anecdotes from years of parenting that often didn't relate to their car biographies or countryside engagement *per se*. Where omissions were made, a brief summary of the discussion was noted in the transcript to situate the progression of the interview. Similarly for the occasions when participants digressed but their tangential discussion was broadly relevant, it was most efficient to summarise the content within the transcript also. For example, when Rita talked about her countryside driving through a novel she had read but detailed the entire storyline that was largely superfluous, again I summarised the key points in the transcript. When transcribing the post-videoing interviews I adopted a much more pragmatic approach. For post-videoing interviews, parts of the conversation were transcribed verbatim where relevant to the research questions, with less relevant parts of the interview summarised. The choice of which sections to transcribe verbatim was made during the process of listening back to the conversation and prioritising transcribing any discussion that could have relevance to the research questions; both in terms of accessing data about 'rural' performance, as well as participants' methodological reflections.

Video data handling presented some challenges. From each participant, several hours of video was received as even if they had only recorded one drive, there were still two films (one looking into the car, one looking out onto the road), doubling the volume of data to process. Technical (not methodological) issues were encountered in the processing of this data, though these are detailed in the Technical Post-script, within the *Methodological*

Appendix, as such discussion offers little insight to the methodological dimension of video methods' use. The analysis of the video data *per se* is detailed below.

3.3.2 Analysing textual data

Prior to beginning the analysis I was acutely aware of the role of transcription in developing critical reflection on the data. Indeed after the first two focus groups and four interviews I revised the interview schedule (see *Methodological Appendix*) to ensure that I was funnelling the participants towards being able to discuss their embodied experiences of countryside car use. Consequently, the analysis was not a discrete stage of the research process, rather an iterative negotiation engaged in from the beginning of the data collection in order to evaluate the efficacy of the methods, the data collected and my research performance too. During the transcription process I was reflecting on the emergent themes, and whilst for the initial interviews the transcription was exhaustive and verbatim, when it came to transcribing the post-videoing interviews, critical reflection on the content was key to generating a more concise 'interview summary' transcript. Throughout the initial stages of data processing I was making analytical notes in my field diary.

Using NVivo8 facilitated the data analyses, beginning with the textual data. Transcripts were uploaded into a project within the software, and coded using the tools available to generate 'nodes'. Although NVivo8 has functions that can analyse the data using computing algorithms (for example, conducting a content analysis), these were not used as their analytical capacity afforded little depth, and ultimately conflict with the epistemological foundations of the research questions. Whilst I discuss this further in Section 3.3.4 below, it is useful to note here that the approach adopted to analysis was thematic, adopting a 'Grounded Theory' approach to coding the data by initially coding descriptively, then analytically (Glasser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990; 1998).

3.3.3 Video analysis

Since I was broadly following Laurier *et al*'s 'Habitable Cars' method in practice (Laurier *et al*, 2008; Laurier, 2010), I also took their analytical approach as a starting point. However, as I detail above, the epistemological difficulty with the 'Habitable Cars' ethnomethodological analysis is that its foundational tenets are critically different from the theoretical rationale of Schatzkian Practice Theory that this research agenda employs. In adopting an ethnomethodology, and the associated conversation-analytic approach (see, Heath *et al*, 2010), Laurier *et al*'s work draws on a tradition of sociological thinking whereby "social order is seen not as a pre-existing force constraining individual action, but as something that is worked at and accomplished through interactions" (Bryman, 2005: 493). The key distinction to draw between ethnomethodology and Schatzkian Social Practice Theory is that

practice theory goes beyond the conversational in foregrounding the body as the site for critical purchase. That social life is conducted equally through ‘doings’, a physicality is emphasised, and in turn, I contend should be explored. This is the opportunity that I think video methods present: by producing data that is more-than-verbal – drawing on Crang’s (2002) progress report – and analysing video more holistically than a conversation analysis approach affords, the research could gain traction on what the embodied dimensions of performing ‘the rural’ were in the context of driving. For example, Ian drives down a bumpy road he had selected specifically to experience the embodied affect of the rural landscape was captured on video. Given that this work addresses a gap in the literature on Practice Theory underpinning methodological innovation, there is little in terms of established analytical techniques that I could have drawn upon. Thus to develop a valid and robust analytical approach I found myself appropriating aspects of ethnomethodology in practice, but nuancing these through a Schatzkian lens. The outcome was an analytical approach that adopted much of Laurier *et al* (2008) and Heath *et al*’s (2010) techniques, for example turning the video into extracts, but not focusing at the conversation level, rather considering the video as a situated moment.

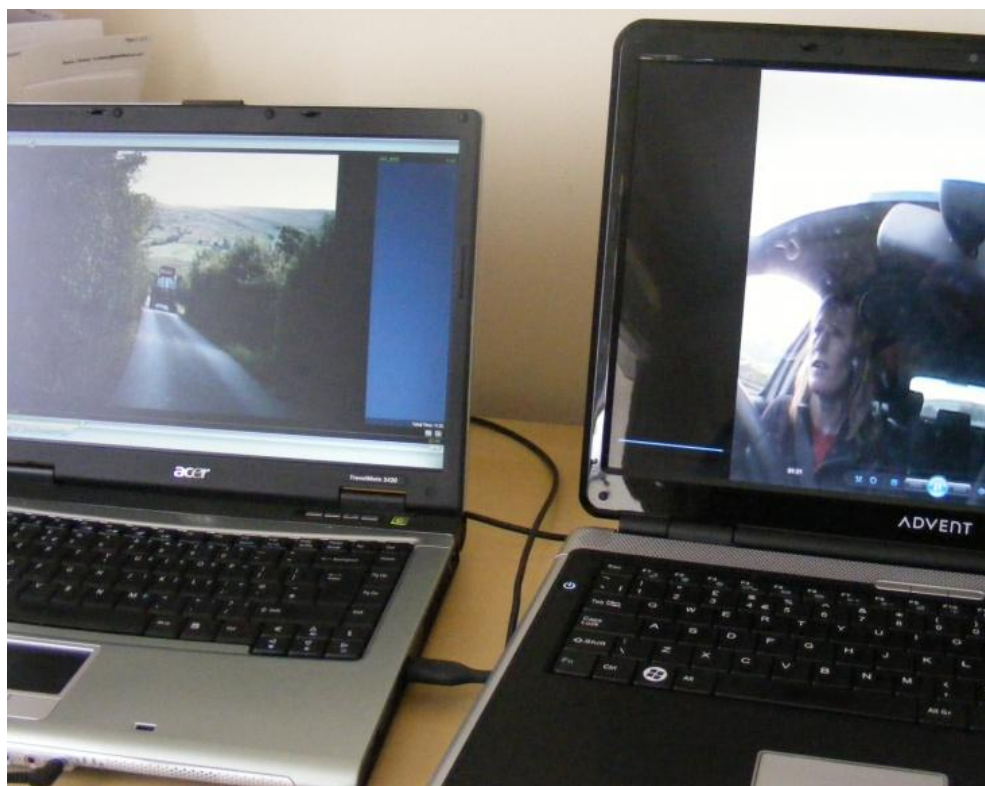
Watching the video data through without pauses, playing both videos (the external and internal video footage) simultaneously using two computers placed side by side (see, *Figure 3.3*) was the first stage of video analysis. Using two computers made beginning each video at the same time easier, and also that one computer wasn’t being made to run two open video files. Once familiar with the data, the first stage of analysis began with a largely descriptive exercise making notes on the video. These notes were chronologically recorded for each participant’s video data (both the external and internal video was analysed together as they were watched in parallel). I created a descriptive schedule of the videos’ rich moments where the data offered insight that may relate to any of the four research questions. Creating a schedule involved recording which video (either ‘E’ for external or ‘I’ for internal), the time of a relevant occurrence, and described the details to summarise that excerpt of the video. The creation of a schedule that detailed the video content is akin to Haw and Hadfield’s (2011: 41) approach using ‘logging sheets’ which they argue is a critical step in the analytical process:

“Logging the video as it comes in is not just a technical process. It does two things that are analytically powerful. First, it provides the researcher with an overview of the data as they come in, which helps the researcher pick up on patterns and contradictions they find interesting (...) The second thing it does is help with data management and reduction” (Haw and Hadfield, 2011: 41-42)

Once the logging sheet, or schedule, was created, the next stage was to begin to edit the data, but before that could commence a period of time was left (usually a couple of days). When

one is immersed in repeatedly watching the data, as part of the first stage, there is a tendency to detail every noteworthy occurrence, whether it's necessarily relevant to the research questions or not. Taking time away from immersion in the video allows for critical reflection on the notes made in the schedule, particularly in relation to the research questions. The video data was then edited into discrete, ordered 'extracts', often with fewer excerpts making the cut than were initially outlined in the first schedule. The process of generating 'logging schedules' could be equated to a 'descriptive coding' of the video data. The second phase of selecting which extracts to cut out was more analytical, readily negotiated through the relevance of sections to the research questions.

To guide my approach to editing the video data I looked to the established practices in ethnomethodology, again stemming from Laurier *et al*'s work (*ibid.*). Heath *et al* (2010) recommend that when working with video data the researcher creates extracts of sections from the whole in order to be able to focus their analysis. Video editing with the intention of applying a conversation analysis focuses more in-depth attention on fewer extracts, but instead, a more pragmatic approach was adopted whereby the data was edited into extracts so I could manage engagement with useful sections to provide a way into the data (Heath *et al*, 2010). Editing the data into extracts enabled thematic exploration of the video data within



*Figure 3.3: Analysing Internal and External Video Simultaneously
(Photograph Author's Own)*

NVivo8 alongside the textual data, but also facilitated the communication of video back to and with participants in the post-videoing interview. Discussion of how the extracts were developed and reproduced as participant DVDs is contained in the Technical Post-Script (*Methodological Appendix*).

Editing of the video data was conducted using the outline schedule, through critically reflecting on which parts of the video data were empirically rich in relation to the research questions. This process was completed for each video participants made, cutting out the video data that offered little or no insight that was relevant to the research questions, leaving multiple extracts for further analysis (as opposed to a conversation-analytic approach which may have selected fewer, more extended extracts). Broadly, video data was made into extracts that fell into one or more of the following four categories: methodological, to explore how the method works in practice; thematically relevant to the research questions or illustrative (i.e. linked to previous coding); elicitation, for use to initiate discussion, incite reaction or evoke a (possibly more-than-verbal) response in the post-videoing interview; or (re)presentation extracts, which depict the rural space in particularly engaging visualities, for example that may have reproduced a discursively dominant ‘rural’ aesthetic. For each moment the participant was recording there were two videoed perspectives; one looking in, one looking out. There were instances where both videos are relevant data on a given point; for example where Mike is driving down a potholed road and the external footage captures the surface, while the internal footage captures the effect of that road on his body. But, the outline notes often referenced either the external or the internal video, meaning editing often disconnected the data from its videoed counterpart.

All of the extracts created were imported into the NVivo8 project. For each extract, the notes from the extract summary sheet were imported too, to sit alongside the video itself. Each of the extracts were coded, using a combination of the existing codes that had already been generated and new codes that were emergent from the video data. A considerable number of extracts were coded to the ‘method’ node when the video data was captured how the video method was working in practice. Drawing on the suggestion from Heath *et al* (2010), where notes were made in the outline schedule instances where participants were orientating to the cameras this video data was ‘edited in’. There were two reasons for doing this, both of which I intend to explore through further analysis beyond my thesis. First, the methodological extracts feed into analysis of the method *per se* whilst also depicting the ways in which orientation occurred. Second, they offered a way to situate discussions about the method in practice that I had with participants in the post-videoing interview.

3.3.4 Analysis across the Data

In practice, the two analytical streams described above, for the textual and video data, were simultaneous and interconnected in how they unfolded. NVivo8 provided the capacity to create codes, link codes structurally and build linkages across textual and video data. The use of computer aided qualitative analysis software was a means to analyse all of the data consistently and collectively. The software enabled management of the research data analysis, and facilitated a thematic analysis, informed by ‘Grounded Theory’ (Glasser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990; 1998). All data was uploaded into the NVivo8 project and initially coded for descriptive codes. As the analysis progressed the descriptive codes developed into analytical codes, whereby thematic connections and the formation hierarchies (in NVivo8, ‘tree nodes’) could be identified. By adopting firstly a descriptive coding, then an analytical rationalisation with all data – be it a transcript or a video extract – a systematic and rigorous analysis was conducted. NVivo8 was also useful in this process as it offered tools to make notes within the data that could then also be coded, if and when I thought necessary. Having a virtual space for data analysis where each component of the project was accessible, and can be readily manipulated, whether it is the actual data or the codes where excerpts of the data are collated together, consolidated the analysis process.

But much analytical work also took place beyond the NVivo8 project. It is imperative to recognise that the conceptualisation and development of analytical themes was emergent from my interpretative approach to the data’s emergent themes. In this sense, the NVivo8 project functioned as a workspace, within which gatherings of descriptive codes could be analytically structured, where I identified linkages. Linkages, drawn together in ‘tree-nodes’, may have been informed by similar experiences being recounted, spatial scales, performances that exhibited particular attitudes or values about rural space, or where the data illustrated, or at least connected with, themes that were *apriori* in the literature. The outcome of the analytical approach was to develop several critical veins of findings that have been woven together in the thesis discussion.

3.4 Reflections on Approach

As the fieldwork progressed, the methodological framework was iteratively refined, as in the process of conducting the fieldwork it became clear that such extensive data collection was not required in order to address the research questions. In the first instance the intention was for the research to combine focus groups (six – eight), in-depth interviews (approximately twenty-five) and video data generation (six – eight participants). By processing and reflecting on emergent themes in the data throughout the fieldwork, this enabled me to make the decision at an early stage in the data collection that focus groups were not going to generate the kinds of data the research questions required. Moreover, triangulation (see, Hay,

2005) between the bricolage of data reinforced the decision to stop the data collection once twenty-nine participants had been recruited. Emergent themes encountered in the early stages of interviewing were echoed through the data. For example, participants talked about their 'life stage', 'seasons' and 'the visual' in each interview as relevant to the way that they performatively engaged with their cars in countryside. If I were to collect further data I would have preferred to collect more video data and conduct further post-videoing interviews as the video data enabled elicitation that generated some of the most in-depth discussions about embodied experience.

Questions in interviews were intended to be open-ended, but there were clearly moments where I led the participant to talk about particular issues. However, in some situations participants needed further guidance about what I wanted them to talk about. Some struggled to see the relevance of the kinds of things I wanted to know, privileging talking about the quantifiable facts (how many cars they'd owned, at what life stage or age, for example) rather than their emotional, embodied values surrounding the car. The structure of the interview became key, whereby much of the discussion was superfluous to the research agenda. For example, I often discussed participants' car histories with them, not because I wanted to know specifics about their car biographies in terms of what type of car and at what stage of their lives, rather as an exercise in getting people to consider their relationships to cars. As the research questions require data that necessitates an embodied introspection from participants, emergent from trusting situations, often the interviews would funnel towards the key questions of 'comfort'. The notion of 'comfort' is how ideas of embodiment and the phenomenal embodied landscape were introduced into the conversation. By using concepts that participants could work with, data on their embodied rural driving emerged. Another key example of a concept that effectively generated responses was to get participants to talk about their 'favourites'. When discussing car ownership, or rural road use, there was a tendency for participants to not consider their answers valid, or not want to articulate their emotions for their cars. However using the notion of 'favourite' – tell me about your favourite countryside road in Derbyshire – implies that it's okay to have one. I was mindful of enacting a researcher performance that destabilised any assumption people had about my agenda that may have been from (mis)understandings of what geography as a discipline entails. Some initial reactions people had were borne out of an assumption that the research had an environmental agenda. When I could reassure them within the interview that I genuinely valued their perspective, on 'favourite road' in particular, then breakthroughs were made in forming viable, useful data to address the research questions.

Video data collection was a challenge because the equipment participants were required to operate was problematic in unforeseen ways. Video cameras were a problem for

some participants who were perhaps not as technologically literate as I had anticipated. The fish-eye lens was fitted via an expansion clip to the video camera, but unfortunately it tended to drop off often when the car was travelling along any relatively bumpy roads. The failure of the equipment frustrated some participants, who were concerned that they weren't doing it right, it distracted them whilst they were driving and undoubtedly was instrumental in Beth only recording one drive. Road-testing the equipment more thoroughly could have potentially overcome the latter issue, but participants who were technology-literate found participation much more engaging.

Video methods also suffered a considerable amount of low or non-participation. Participants cited their busy lives as hindering them from getting the cameras set up before they went driving in the countryside. Nicky had the equipment and enthusiasm but never actually made any videos because each time she felt it an appropriate drive to record, the thought of 'all of the equipment' was too onerous. Similarly, Beth had intended to record several drives, but only recorded two in total (one return journey). That participants felt the method too time consuming, laborious and onerous, despite their enthusiasm to take part, was addressed part-way through the data collection. Initially participants were asked to record a selection of their rural drives, over a period of a month. When it became clear (after two participants stalling) that this was too much, the framing for participation then reduced to one drive, on one occasion. This resulted in three more successful generations of video data. Rich data was gathered from recording just one drive that enabled the elicitation in post-video interviewing, meaning in the future I could meet participants prior to them going out in their car and set it up for them to initiate the data collection to alleviate participants' initial hesitancy.

Conducting video data analysis within an ethnographic approach was an empirical challenge. As Sobchack's (1992) seminal work on the phenomenology of audio-visual media reminds, playback of video data is a filmic moment that has resounding affect. The empirical challenge presented stems from video data's communicative capacity. For example, I vividly remember driving along between Hope village and Edale, unsure how I had seen the road before in these conditions, only to recall having seen video data of roads in this area. In that moment, my landscape perception was not only drawing on my own embodied memories of driving, but simultaneously the landscapes of the video data were suspended in my memories. It was incredibly disorientating and continued to happen: as more video data arrived the *déjà-vu* recurred. It left me reticent about repeatedly viewing video when its experience was transcending into the drives I was conducting on an everyday basis. I found myself remembering roads not (yet) travelled. The experience of space blurring between my drive in practice and the video data circulating in memory was, however, theoretically very powerful. I came to conceptualise the road space repeatedly

viewed on video and in practice as inherently mundane, yet in tension between embodied and filmic experience. Critically, the affect served to reinforce Ingold's (2007a) thesis for the inherent animation of the line, as subsequently explored in the substantive *Road* chapter.

Further affects of the filmic power viewing video has (Sobchack, 1992) transcended into the post-videoing interviews. The screen showing the video data seduced the attention of the participant: only pausing the video provided a sojourn from the immediacy that the conversation adopted whilst the participant was reacting to their video data. Eye contact between researcher and participant was always minimal, as attention could be directed to looking at the screen. The non-verbal intimations and the utterances made in response are difficult for the researcher to engage with. The difficulty is practically engendered, from placement of the screen between researcher and participant, the question schedule to negotiate, the video extracts to navigate and notes to take. The post-videoing interview demands engagement with multiple dimensions that the interview is composed through – challenging the extent to which the participant's performance can be engaged with. Moreover, there is little precedent for researcher performance in this scenario. Do you hold back, observe, or intervene with a question to tease out what is holding their attention in the video? In practice the conversation is messier than a semi-structured interview and this is reflected in the transcription; making summaries with embedded, situating notes was most attentive to the negotiation of conversation between researcher participant and video data than verbatim transcripts. The messiness of the conversations that ensued far from negated the value of video, rather they serve to highlight the power of such data collection to the phenomenological scale in methodological endeavours.

Consequently, the challenging environment to maintain conversation whilst competing with a screen requires the researcher to have a comprehensive understanding of the video data. In placing a screen between participant and researcher, the expectation was for illustration to be through the screen. To mitigate this, prior to each interview a 'video extract plan' was noted in the field diary – what to play in which order – to ensure all extracts that were conceived as potentially good for eliciting a response would be shown.

Moreover, following Sobchack (1992), the 'picture' is incredibly powerful; here video data's picture illustrated a view of the participants' driving performances that they had largely not seen before. The internal camera was confronting, and time for orientation to seeing the self driving on screen was required. Discourses of 'proper' or 'correct' driving practices often shaped initial reflections as participants considered their driving in practice in relation to social norms of good driving practice. However, this was arguably compounded by the method of presentation. Again drawing on Sobchack, viewing of the video data should be conceived as always owing to the medium through which it was encountered. Participants looked at themselves on my computer, often in an ad-hoc rig-up where we were

huddled around the screen in their lounge, dining room or work room, potentially conscious that they had me, the researcher ‘guest’ in their company. Moreover (although clearly outlined in the research information sheet), ownership of the video data was arguably ambiguous. The video performance visually, in embodied memory and ethically belonged to the participant, yet the data was held by the research, being viewed as a resource of that project (as opposed to their television or computer). The video data embodies the tension of empirical data ownership, but by putting it to work in a post-video interview animates that tension.

Reflexively engaging with the affect that the video data, alongside my questions, had in the post-videoing interview opens up space for problematising the video method *per se*. In this research context there are no shortages of filmic representations that both preclude the car and centralise it within the countryside (the titles to ‘Antiques Road Show’ verses the titles to ‘Countryfile’ for example). Producing video data to understand how discursive rural car engagements resonate in practice needs to acknowledge that the data itself could be viewed as a reproduction of those dominant discourses. And in being so, this has implications for the way that participants potentially engaged with the video data, that, critically, were not necessarily drawn out enough in the post-videoing interview. Showing the external view and asking whether that’s representative of their experience, or how it depicted memories, does not engage participants in the issue of what they conceive ‘the rural’ imaginary to be. On the contrary, it gives participants a composition to append those values to. Although, when participants responded to this question explaining that the video data was different from their imaginary of practice, the value of the method came to the fore. Participant narratives would turn to describing the difference, illuminating a disparity between experiential knowledge and engagement in practice captured by the video. For example, asking Beth whether she remembered her driveway as the external video depicted, she explained she experiences ‘less on the track’, though the track dominated the landscape ahead of her car. The video data had opened up space for evaluative discussion on what the car offers as a lens onto performances in rural space; from which the thesis composition benefits.

3.5. Conclusion

Fieldwork ebbed and flowed between recruitment, data generation, processing and analysis in an iterative approach that attended throughout to critical evaluation of the methods developed and deployed. From the outset, the agenda was set for adopting a progressive approach to methodology in order to engage with the theoretical underpinning of the research questions. Schatzkian epistemology gave theoretical traction for a nuanced critique of qualitative methods. Whilst I recognised how other authors in cognate disciplines have

acknowledged the opportunities a Schatzkian-informed conceptual framework presents (Martens, 2012), the departure this methodology takes was to foreground using Schatzkian theory as a basis not just for qualitative critique but also methodological creativity and technological integration. Without the foundational underpinning of Schatzkian ontology, the rationale for integrating video methods would have been less viable, especially in light of work that illustrates how some talk can engage the body (Hitchings, 2012).

A holistic overview of the methodological framework illustrates how talk is, however, integral to the video data produced. Video methods fundamentally generated critical conversation on participants' practices in action through the framing of the video screen. Thus the post-video interview enabled elicitation of more in-depth responses from participants about their performances, as the video provided an incorporeal perspective, but that participants can then speak through. It is imperative to note that it is the conversation that endures, explains and offers orientation to the video data. But, critically, so it should. The video data stands alone as an invaluable archive of rural driving practices, but its analysis raises multiple questions of audiencing, objectifying the participant and the seductiveness of the audio-visual medium. The talk about the video, from the post-videoing interviews, enlivens the performance with how each participant comprehends their driving body. So whilst the methodology needs to recognise the bricolage of data collected, arguably there is still recourse to the power of the verbal (see, Crang, 2002).

Still, reflecting on the video methods' contribution specifically leads to the conclusion that the video data vitally shaped the research findings. Video methodology in this research was about being creative – following Latham's (2003) call for 'creativity' – within a qualitative framework of established methods in order to capture the happenstance of everyday performances of engaging with rurality. This is why, in representing the video data through the thesis there is a conscious attempt to avoid using the video data as an illustrative tool. It requires such conscious engagement to ensure that the video data is engaged with critically, acknowledging its production and situatedness akin to the use of textual quotes.

To avoid objectifying the research participants depicted in the video data, I had to draw on my own experiences of driving to reflexively situate the unfolding scenes. Rather than viewing the video as a disembodied indexer of events, I actively and emotionally engaged in the animation it represented. This is demanding insofar as reflexivity is not straightforward (Rose, 1997): moreover it requires the researcher to constantly re-negotiate their narratives of driving practice, as the video data becomes layered in memory too – a point I have described as an 'empirical challenge' in practice. My own taskscape of rural driving is littered with fragments of video data. So as the thesis unfolds, an attentiveness to interpretation of video data through the position I occupy is attempted, especially to negate

the objectification of research participants whom are presented in the text as still images. Thus, the accompanying DVD to the thesis should be taken as an endeavour for the audience of the thesis to mitigate any objectification that might occur from reading the text, by using the DVD to watch the corresponding extracts at the point in the text their 'plate' is embedded (for full details of the reading of the thesis alongside the video, see *Appendix A*).

The NVivo8 project was the starting point for the genesis of the thesis' chapters. The collective hierarchies of codes ('tree nodes') formed the basis for the broader, high-level themes. From each of these themes, further exploration and interpretation of the data was negotiated alongside the writing process of each chapter, recognising that writing through the data is a process of analytical reflection in and of itself. Thus, the bricolage of data from the multi-method approach interconnects not through analysis platforms such as NVivo, but through the articulation of the themes and the creative composition of the thesis. Whilst NVivo has facilitated the majority of the analysis (except for the video processing done prior to NVivo8 integration), and can demonstrably represent a rigorous and robust approach to the data, the final links to theory and literature to make-relevant these findings happen outside of its capabilities. The narrative of the thesis is emergent from the data's creative expression.

• 4 •

ROAD

4.1 Open(ing) Road

“Odology, the science or study of roads, may seem an exotic discipline, but it tells us much about the values that we hold” (Mauch and Zeller, 2008a:3).

Whether they are multi-lane highways, dust creating dirt tracks or snakes of asphalt winding around stone-walled fields, roads are everyday sites that enable mobility. A road is required for everyday engagements with the countryside through the car. Roads enable individuals to traverse the landscape as mobility ensues along their length. They carry the automotive flow, and harbour the ebbs when the inevitable immobility occurs (see, Bissell, 2007). Mauch and Zeller’s emphasis on values (in the quote above) captures the purpose the thesis has in exploring roads: exploring values about roads emphasises how spatial contexts can offer vantage points on social and cultural values. Thus, following Rudy Koshar’s (2008: 34) observation that, ‘driving always entails a dynamic, meaningful relation among individuals, the car, and the road’, I begin the thesis with a focus on the way the road comes to be imagined, produced and consumed in rural driving contexts. A focus on the road, therefore, is a focus on the space being negotiated when performing engagement with rural spaces through driving.

Developing a holistic conceptualisation of road spaces is a useful starting point to begin to unpack their negotiation within the automobility that they collectively enable. Roads are material manifestations that represent human presences in the landscape (Waitt and Lane, 2007), yet the car comes to be theorised as a negotiation in static landscapes, which silence the variations that occur (Beckman, 2001). Engaging with roads should begin with rejecting static notions of road, and recognising their dynamism. Roads are characterised by their permanent architecture, with maps representing, reproducing and reinforcing their fixed locations, yet each locale is animated by the transitory: the bird in the airspace; the oncoming car in the opposing lane; the ice on the asphalt. The surface, the sidewalks and the stray vegetation; the drainage dykes, crash barriers, stone walls and signage: diverse material dimensions comprise the space of the road. To take the road space as a given would be to deny the role it has in shaping performances within it.

My contention in this chapter is that rural space can be theorised as produced through the medium of the road. If the road provides the spatial context for the car driver to

engage with space, the discerning of rural location arguably owes a lot to the road. The material road presents space, how an individual interacts to produce it as rural is through their own taskscape (Ingold, 1993; 2001) of driving performance. Following Ingold (2007), thinking about the 'line' of the road holistically can conceptualise it as both a space that is materially existent but equally experientially and imaginatively produced-in-motion whilst driving through it. Just as roads are dynamic, so are the situated engagements individuals have with them. Roads are more than lines across landscape; they are visceral, constructed spaces, endured in automobility practices. Thus, defining what constitutes rural spaces, and the rural road *per se*, arguably is negotiated through engaging with a road space.

Roads are somewhat mundane entities in the everyday spaces we inhabit. It is surprising that authors contributing to the mobilities field have, to date, focused predominantly on the car and its relation to the individual (Sheller, 2004; Urry, 2006; Laurier *et al*, 2008; Laurier, 2010; Dant, 2004; Donath, 2007), or to society more broadly (Sheller and Urry, 2000; Urry, 2000; Beckman, 2001; Miller, 2001; Edensor, 2007; Merriman, 2009; 2012; Kingsley and Urry, 2010). But, in this research, roads emerged as a key site for critical attention because participants engaged with their existence. This is a departure from, and contribution to, the existing literature in the automobilities field. For the thesis, roads emerge as imperative spaces, where the discursive notion of rural is played out; shaping how driving in rural space is practiced.

Herein the chapter attends to making two interconnected key contributions. Firstly, the data speaks to the importance of framing subjective engagements with rurality in the car as enduring through the space of the road. The chapter illustrates how the road comes to the fore for several reasons, in the form of surrounds, shape, surface and, as I explore in the latter discussion, sharing. One outcome of this key contribution is to address the gap in the automobilities literature of empirical discussion of road spaces. The second key contribution is to take the values that emerge about roads and unpack them to explore performative dimensions of dominant rural discourses in practice. Throughout the discussion I return to reassert how the road forms the basis through which individuals defined their rural location *per se*; meaning the road serves as both material and imaginative space within the practices discussed. Thus, I focus from here on automobility, as it is relationally produced and experienced by individuals driving along roads that they have subjectively defined as rural. My argument for a holistic approach to the power of the road in driving begins with reflection on the key concepts available through the literature to establish a theoretical context.

4.2 Conceptualising Road

To begin to theorise the road through which automotive engagement with the rural is shaped, necessitates giving consideration to the literature that engages with road spaces *per se*.

Ingold's (2007a) writing on 'Lines' offers a theoretical framing that is a useful starting point. In arguing for the richness of the 'line' as it is lived through time, and socially and culturally produced, Ingold emphasises how thinking within such a spatial metaphor can be productive. Ingold reminds that it is important to think about the ubiquity of the linear within the everyday, and crucially, how lines are put to work. Roads are lines to be conceived holistically Ingold muses:

“A word should be said about roads ... there are two senses in which such channels of communication can be understood. On the one hand they are plotlines in themselves, joining specific locations by a route that pre-exists the traffic that flows between them. On the other hand, the asphalt of the road ... form[s] surfaces over which vehicles ... move ... In every case, however, whether we see a channel of communication as a plotline or as a set of guidelines depends on whether we focus on its communicative aspect, of 'going from A to B', or its channelling aspect, of guiding movement over a surface” (Ingold, 2007a:160).

What this captures is how it is useful to think about road spaces in terms of their everyday performative uses. 'Communicative' emphasises the movement and journeying that the road enables. On the other hand, 'channel' sets the road space up as an all-encompassing conduit whereby material facets are connected with along the road course. In setting up this dualism of 'communicative' or 'channelling', Ingold adopts a binary view on how roads are engaged with, yet arguably performing a drive along any road may shift between the 'communicative' or 'channelling' within the flow of the journey. However, what Ingold illustrates is how roads are as much about the mobility they afford in 'going from a to b', as interaction with the material characteristics of the 'channel'. Still, Ingold's taskscape notion navigates the dualism by providing a concept to think through how space is encountered with material and temporal situatedness.

Moreover, roads are geographically contingent at key scales. Although inherently contingent on the locale where they are situated, roads accrue meaning through multiple state-scale processes:

‘The linkages between automobility and national identity are multiple, including state regulation; the geographies of ‘roadscares’; driving practices, styles and cultural activities carried out in cars; the auto-service industries; types of journey; the range of representations which centre upon cars; everyday discourse; the economic importance of the symbolic motor industry; and the affordances of vehicles and roads’ (Edensor, 2007:103).

Automobility, therefore, should be understood as fundamentally shaped by a complex negotiation of geographically contingent social, political, legal, physical, economic and

historic dimensions. Cars and driving can be conceptualised as embedded in processes of national identity production, in informing the ‘normative geographies of the national roadscape’ (Ingold and Kurtilla, 2000, *cited from* Edensor, 2007). Using ‘motorscape’, Edensor theoretically positions automobility as comprehensible through Ingold’s (1993; 2001) taskscape notion. Edensor illustrates that the road is the medium through which national driving identities are made. Implicitly, he illustrates the value in paying attention to a holistic road space, a road space that is produced across geographical scales and performed through multiple levels of accrued meaning. Although this work could be critiqued for not engaging with spatial nuances – it lacks specific reflection on the local and subjective scales of negotiating the road by emphasising the performative as reproducing *national* identities – the broader implication of the work is how driving experiences should be situated within a specific national-scale context. Within this research, negotiating national scale cultural situatedness emphasises the sanctity of the space that ‘rural’ roads traverse (Bunce, 2003).

But the empirical application of the research questions necessitates a focus on the individual scale. For a useful starting concept, Dant’s (2004:61) ‘driver-car’ notion, ‘*as a form of social being that produces a range of social actions that are associated with the car*’, offers a means to conceptualise the human-car relationship. The ‘driver-car’ can also be understood through Ingold’s description of the ‘taskscape’, in that it is always performed, from a situated individual perspective and thus, “is perpetually under construction” (Ingold, 2001:199). In acknowledging the role of the road, Dant captures the co-production of individuals’ automobility between the integral material and skill dimensions:

“The perception of road, other moving objects and embodied movement depends not on processing data as a machine would, but through experiencing the process in relation to bodily memory” (Dant, 2004:72).

Thus, embodied spatial memories can be understood as bound up in road perception produced through movement along it. It is therefore surprising that the road is not more central to Dant’s articulation of the ‘driver-car’ concept. Reducing the road negotiation to ‘bodily memory’ omits the spatial context of the performance of automobility. To take this concept forward for discussing the thesis findings requires nuancing it to make the road dimension more explicit.

It is imperative to position the road as a space made through engagement as although it exists as a material conduit, it is the use of the road that animates its meaning in practice. It is therefore also the engagement with road spaces that arguably shapes an individual’s definition of whether they’re in rural space per se. It is through the road that the perception of the landscape is arguably generated. In a similar vein to Edensor’s (2007) application (leading to ‘roadscape’ and ‘motorscape’), the notion of ‘taskscape’ is particularly useful for thinking about the road as always becoming through performative engagement. To theorise

the road as a taskscape of ‘driver-car’ negotiation positions it as always-already emergent from a situated, embodied being. Such conceptualisations are productive for thinking about how automobility comes to be relationally performed by individuals negotiating their skills and competencies of driving practice. Moreover, the taskscape is animate: each road can be conceived as a construction of a myriad of individuals’ experiences that are made and remade in the moments of performance along them. As the chapter unfolds, these are the key concepts taken up and developed through the discussion.

4.3 Unravelling Roads

In what follows, for the first half discussion develops through three interconnected themes; emphasising the performative intricacies bound up in the various facets of road space. Shifting from the scenic, in the first theme entitled ‘**surrounds**’, through to consideration of both the horizontal and vertical ‘**shape**’ of roads, I then explore the ‘**surface**’ of the road, throughout drawing on the empirical material which gave rise to this analysis. In the second half of the chapter I explore how the materially rural road is socially produced, noting how imaginaries of the rural road shape social practices taking place within it. The concluding remarks to the chapter consolidate the analyses and articulate the implications for rural discourse. I also suggest the broader case for rural contexts contributing to theorisations of automobility, before looking forward into the thesis to signpost how the findings presented here underpin the discussion within the following chapters.

4.3.1 Surrounds

Road surrounds are the spaces that immediately flank the road that are visible to the driver whilst on the move; the pavement, the drainage gully, the verge. A holistic perspective should include surrounds as integral to the road space negotiated whilst driving. Verge spaces are embellished with information for interaction that drivers, albeit momentarily, are trained to comprehend whilst on the move. Engaging with road surrounds is embedded in practices of driving, through the incorporation of architectures of control in the road periphery. Institutions such as the Highway Code (Driving Standards Agency, 2007), for example, inform drivers to engage with road surrounds, presenting the road to users as a holistic corridor through space. Consideration of what can be included in the surrounds to a road has long been established as important in road building (Merriman, 2006; 2008).

A Foucauldian framing opens up conceptual space for understanding the relevance of data on road surrounds. Foucault’s (1975) seminal work on the disciplining of the subject presents a thesis for social life as regulated through individuals’ collectively disciplined behaviours. Conceiving of road surrounds as integral to the disciplining of the driver subject empirically applies Foucauldian theory. For example, The Highway Code puts the onus on

the driver-car to conform, but the signals and signage that populate road surrounds are equally designed to regulate the road space by disciplining the driver-car to the specificities of that geographical locale. The Highway Code's disciplining imperatives are reasserted in, amongst other ways, controlling technologies like speed cameras, traffic lights and signs situated in the road surrounds; indeed, participants noted these features of control in the rural road surrounds that they discussed. Becoming a legal driver requires internalising the disciplining of road signage in order to gain a driving licence. Thus, road surrounds, through their architectures of control, arguably foreground the driver-car as the subject of the road's power and subsequently discipline the performances that endure there.

Moreover, engaging with road surrounds necessitates visual primacy to driving performances. How surrounds of rural roads have emerged must in some way be situated within this cultural context of learned driving practices of the UK. This links back through Edensor's (2007) ideas on national-scale as key formative power in shaping driving practices. Drivers engage with road surrounds in the countryside in part because that is what they are disciplined to do. Yet rural road surrounds are articulated back in the data largely in landscape bents that don't often set road surrounds up as disciplining dimensions of the road. On the one hand the engagement with surrounds enables the driver-car to locate their driving geographically and simultaneously as rural *per se*. But on the other, road surrounds offer space for interacting with the road dynamically, in visual and temporal registers, as the data illuminates.

Rural roads' presentation to a driver matters: a road into, through, from, around or across rural space is how the 'driver-car' (subjectively) discerns their location as rural. The road is drivers' passage through space, and their interaction with the space of the road informs their idea of whether they're navigating a rural road *per se*. Beth's video data captured the road's changing surrounds:

Extract 4.1: Surrounds





Cocooned by a lush and lofty archway of well-established trees, at first the grass verge can be seen butting up to the dry stone wall that forms the physical boundary of the public road space from private fields. But the verdant tree canopy expands as the car journeys along. Momentarily there's an enclosed corridor, then, as the trees give way, the vista opens up, expanding the horizon of the road to encompass a wider visual field: the surrounds' materiality transforms with the movement the car enables. What the road space offers in terms of 'rural' aesthetic animates the engagement with rural space since the road surrounds change as the car moves along their length.

Moreover, specific visualities that resonate in rural driving are memories of road surrounds. Road surrounds emerged as the way in which distinct rural roads were differentiated in practice. For Rita, a road she emphatically engaged with was articulated through the visuality the road surrounds afforded as part of her drive: "*Hathersage to Grindleford, I love the trees down there. I just always think to myself very, very beautiful road*" (Rita). Similarly, other participants recognised when the road surrounds augmented their experience, with Neil noting how on one road he frequents, "*it's got a tunnel, like a green canopy tunnel about it*". Lastly, in conversation about her driving prior to generating the video portrayed in the extract above, Beth was keen to emphasise how the road surrounds animate her rural driving. When Beth suggested that "*there's a road just*

approaching Owler Bar ... orchids, they're lovely, really lovely", she highlighted how road surrounds also enable geographical differentiation to manifest in practice also.

Such findings demand recognising the rural road as more than the asphalt ahead, the data demonstrating that the road is engaged with as a space of light and shade, enclosure and expanse. However, in each of the above, the engagement with the road surrounds is idiosyncratic, illustrating how the road space is subjectively made in performance. Experiencing road surrounds accrue as the 'roadscape' that drivers and occupants produce in order to make sense of the space that they're travelling through. When Sheller (2004) suggested that human-car selections can be understood as 'kinaesthetic investments', she alluded to the power the individual has through the car to shape their roadscape visually. Arguably the same exists for road spaces, albeit more ephemerally, in that the driver-car can select 'kinaesthetic investments' in the form of roads, through the surrounds each route offers.

Furthermore, roads' surrounds encompass multiple temporalities that are inevitably integral to individuals' roadscape too. Temporalities of the road are shaped by what is engaged with in its surrounds: between the permanent geography the tarmac occupies, from the seasons that push along flora and fauna changes, to the momentary presence of a bird in the sky above the road. As Robert recounts, the surrounds of this road change on an annual, seasonal basis in a way that he actively engages with: *"it's a sort of tunnel ... It has that feeling of enclosure and you see the trees at different seasons, they always look different"* (Robert). In suggesting that the road itself evokes a 'feeling', he highlights an embodied resonance produced through the temporalities of the road surrounds. Similarly, when Drew was talking about his drive home from work, the seasonal specificities of the road's surrounds shape his embodied production of the landscape he navigates through: *"on a summer's night when you drive down there and you've got the valley dropping off at the side and it just relaxes you so much more"* (Drew). That a road in summertime can evoke a 'relaxing' sentiment attests to the investment the driver-car can opt to make in their road choice. Some aspects of the driver experience can therefore be understood as made through the temporalities that the road surrounds encompass. Just as Ingold (1993; 2001) emphasises, landscape is not static *per se*, it's always produced in an interaction with its temporality.

In the context of rural driving, roads emerge as defined through and by their surrounds. Surrounds embellish the road to necessitate it encompasses more than just the tarmac. It is here signage and signals to discipline driver-car performances are located. Normative driving practices necessitate engagement with surrounds such that they become integral to the subjective experiences of navigating along any road; but rural roads' engagement illustrates experience through the framing of rural discourse. The imaginaries of

rural space that pervade social consciousnesses of the British countryside (see, Cloke, 2006) arguably mediate perceptions of what road surrounds offer a ‘driver-car’ experience; because if the surrounds fit the discursive ideals of the countryside, then the road – and therefore the driver-car location – can belong to rural space. Just as the road itself is subjectively produced, the perception of landscape encountered from and through the road produces fluid, subjective boundaries for where ‘rural’ roads are experienced. Surrounds emerge as animate, and powerful in the perception and production of the rural.

4.3.2 *Shape*

Road ‘shape’ emerges as a key dimension in the production of the ‘driver-car’ experience. By ‘shape’, I refer to two connected, but distinct, aspects to the road. The first I shall discuss is *horizontal* shape of the road; that is the way that roads meander and curve through the landscape. The second aspect of ‘shape’ is the *vertical* shape of the road. Vertical shape refers to roads’ changes in pitch and gradient as contours are overcome along its duration. In practice, these two dimensions of road variance are intrinsically connected; as corners camber for example. Each of these aspects can be understood from the video data:

Extract 4.2: Shape





The ‘driver-car’ meanders along the lithe lane, winds up the valley side and must pause for an oncoming vehicle to pass. The sinuous nature of this stretch illustrates how road shape initially has implications for automobility: given the lack of any extended lines of sight and constant need to steer, the road shape here inevitably affects the way the driver must skilfully negotiate their performance. The horizontal changes in road shape script the ebbs and flows in the way the car propels and seemingly pauses as it makes its way up the hill. Equally, how the road is topographically shaped must also resonate performatively, in the driving skills required to propel the car upwards. The rural road is characterised by its horizontal curvature but also its variance on the vertical plane. Both dimensions of shape are intimately entwined, with each being empirically illustrated as affective in bodily registers.

Horizontal shape of the rural road resonates in memories of engaging with rural space. Participants would reflect on their driving performances on rural roads highlighting horizontal bends. The tight corners made for engaged driving that physically affected their bodies in a conscious reflection on what the rural road shape offers, as Lisa’s data suggests:

“Via Gellia and up to Newhaven then along to Buxton that way, that’s quite a nice road, a nice route. ... I think because it’s twisty, twiney, and it’s a little bit more interesting” (Lisa).

Lisa engaged in her cross-country route owing to the curvature of the roads’ shape she selected; an active choice that engendered interest to her drive. Thus the road shape for her animated her drive to Manchester. In a similar vein, Bill emphasised how curvature can be consciously navigated to achieve embodied affect when he stated, *“the route I take[...] is all country lanes, includes some quite hairy, windy, twisty ones. It is good fun though”*. Bill opts into a route he defines as rural and in doing so the drive accrues more *fun*; the road shape providing an engagement with space he responds to in exhilaration. In each example, there is a positioning of road shape as pivotal within the spatial imaginary of achieving situated performances of (rural) automobility. The shape of the road engenders an engagement with the space that is both imaginatively constructed, and materially experienced, as a

performance of driving to be revelled in. Each example demonstrates a selection of roads to ensure physical engagement with the car, highlighting how there is a conscious engagement with road memory (Dant, 2004), in the context of shape.

Secondly, the vertical variance in road shape also comes to be understood through the 'driver-car' assemblage. Just as the video extract demonstrated, road shape can equally be understood as vertical changes in the road gradient. Depending on the scale of the variance, and the characteristics of the car, the response by the driver-car is contingent too. Akin to the horizontal, this dimension of road shape comes to be consciously engaged with. For Natalie, her relationship to the old campervan car she owns comes to the fore when the road shape changes vertically: *"I'm just thinking about we're coming up to a hill I better get ready to change down into second, take a deep breath, put my muscles in gear"* (Natalie). In response to the road developing into hill, Natalie becomes acutely aware of performing a mechanical and an embodied 'driver-car' competence. She knows what the car requires to achieve the road shape ahead, and she locates that performance in the demands on her body; stimulating her muscles and (figuratively) oxygenating her lungs. Her body awareness is mediated through the driver-car-road relationality. For Ian, the shifts in road incline, on one of his familiar routes, lead him to interpret road shape as enabling amusement that he can share with others. Describing the road, he thinks through his body of the value he invests in road shape's vertical variance:

"one I do like is the road which you may not know which goes from Owl Bar down towards Chesterfield. And there's been a fair amount of subsidence on that road and it's like a switchback. And the car almost bounces as you go along. And I sometimes take my grandson down there and you have to really hold on tight and it really bounces around the place. That's a fun road ... because it's so, it's not just bumpy, it's actually got dips and you know very close together so the car does this. Bounces all over the place. That's quite fun." (Ian).

Describing the road shape as leading to tighter gripping of the car highlights how the driver-car relation is nuanced by the shape of the road. But this quote also illustrates the purchase Ian finds in the rural road shape to exhilarate his (and his passengers) bodies. His narration of engagement resonates with Ingold's (1993; 2001) notion that the taskscape is borne out of interactivity. By repeating 'bounce', Ian's description is saturated in energy that is relationally produced through the road space. The effects in his body of the relation between the moving car and the affordances of the road animate his taskscape of rural production.

Furthermore, Ian had selected the stretch purposively to capture the shape of the road. Ian showed how he meanders his car along the horizontal curvature and downhill gradient before the departures in the vertical plane challenge the driver-car in to maintain automobility:

Extract 4.3: Seeking Shape



I noted in the video data schedule:

“the anticipated impact on his body begins. The bumps are over very quickly, quicker than I expected given that he’d revered this stretch considerably enough to select it. Also, the body does move vigorously, there is a visible shaking of both car and driver”.

When Ian arrived at the subsidence, he was driving in a way to accommodate the shakiness the road shape was causing; making rapid steering movements clockwise and anti-clockwise, whilst his body ‘*bounces all over the place*’. The video data further demonstrates how road

shape is accommodated by the skilled, competent driver to achieve automobility by being aware of how changes in one shape axis plays out in the other, knowing through embodied memory the affect on the body. What this data suggests is that shape of the road is not understood as either horizontal or vertical but concurrently both axes are negotiated. Corners camber, shifting the vertical gradient: changes in incline, especially if they're in quick succession as Ian's stretch demonstrates, demand steering adjustments to accommodate directional changes the road shape asserts. Both dimensions of road shape engender affect for the driving body. In the performance of driving, the shape of the road can be understood as important in the construction of the 'driver-car' relation.

Thus, road shape mediates the relationality between road and driver- car, which resonates in enduring, situated driving practices. Moreover, shape of the road comes to be relationally constructed as an embodied, emotive, engaging feature of roads, particularly when performing countryside driving practice. How individuals engaged with the shape of the road showed that horizontal and vertical changes in the line of travel resonated in embodied experience. However, the horizontal curvature and the vertical variance that characterises the rural road is arguably an expression of 'rural' discourse that owes much of its articulation (and recognition arguably) to the notions of the rural 'idyll'. Discursive imaginaries of driving through the countryside would emphasise how, although the shape of the road is on occasion very straight or flat, the rural road is in some way more connected to the landscape. 'Rural' notions evoke the curved imaginary of road space, reinforced in popular media; for example, the titles to *The Antiques Roadshow* (2013) or *Postman Pat* (see, Horton, 2008a; 2008b). Talking about road shape, I would suggest, is a theme mediated by both lived actualities, whereby roads follow field boundaries, woodland edges and ancient moorland toll-ways, as well as discursive notions of rurality.

4.3.3 Surface

Connecting with the previous discussion, the surface may be interpreted as the communicative medium for 'shape' (particularly vertical shape), but here I want to confine discussion of 'surface' to the immediate texture and visible traits of the road. Surface, herein, refers to the material, tacit facade, where cars are in contact with the road. Technically, the car/road interface is the four peripatetic rectangles of rubber tyre that touch the road surface at any one time. These are relatively small contact points compared to vehicle sizes, but they have profound theoretical and empirical resonance in practice. A multitude of deviations could populate the surface at any one time: for example, ice; rainwater; manure; salt; grit; vegetation; scree; oil; paint; petrol and tarmac patches for potholes. Given that automobility is fundamentally an achievement of navigating the road through the road/car interface, recognising the car's contact with the road is relatively small,

compared to its size, accentuates the influence of surface in the driver-car and road relationality. The ‘channelling’ dimension on the road that Ingold (2007*a*) notes, gestures at the importance of surface, and notably, Waitt and Lane (2007) demonstrate that surfaces engender nuances in engagements with place. Moreover, surfaces have recently emerged as valuable sites for critical attention (Forsyth *et al*, 2013; Lorimer, 2013). In this discussion, there are two aspects to surface that emerged from the data. Firstly I will briefly illustrate the notion of tactile surface, before considering the disciplining, communicative dimensions of surfaces, linking back to my earlier discussion of disciplining through road surrounds.

Principally, road surfaces should be understood as dynamic. Recognising the surface as tactile emerges from seeing in the data the multitude of gravel that peppers the tarmac; the seasonal leaf-fall; the ice and snow atop the asphalt in the winter; the potholes formed by freeze-thaw, and the puddles of water from the rain: each nuance in surface condition shapes the material, visceral dimensions of the road at the contact points it has with the driver-car. The surface harbours water collected in potholes that are hidden amongst the tarmac patches:

Extract 4.4: Surface





The data illustrates how road surfaces affect the driver-car by capturing its response to the road surface in the juddering framing of the video. But, the car continues forward, accommodating the accrued surface departures. Automobility ensues as cars are arguably designed to accommodate varied surface conditions.

Moreover, the resonance of ‘rural’ discourse is never too far away. The perception endures that rural roads offer the ‘driver-car’ a ‘better’ surface to navigate; constructed as a road surface that is smooth, and least physically resonant. For example Derek perceived that *“the roads in the countryside seem in much better condition than the ones nearer the towns, you don’t have as many potholes in them”*; in a similar sentiment, Mike suggested in his production and experience of rural space, *“roads are certainly in a better state”*; with Tarek making a point of noting how he thought rural roads were *“well maintained”* too. Each imaginary of the rural road draws out comparatives with more urban road spaces, using the notion of surface to emphasise a perceived heightened enjoyment of the rural road. It is largely irrelevant whether the surface is ‘better’ *per se*, since the enduring memory each of these individuals have takes precedence as their experience of rural space. Their driver-car experience, however, clearly is mediated through the road tactility, and I would argue, that there is both a physical and discursive negotiation taking place. The romanticising, perpetuated by discourses of rural space, extends into the embodied sentiments that individuals have about road surfaces too:

“sometimes you get a bit of discomfort, or the car has to drive on a road that you’d rather not be down, just the surface is not good, it’s just part of the whole experience” (Lynne).

Lynne recognises in performing automobility as a driver-car that the road surface affects her. She endures the surface, though constructs it as problematic for both the driver and the car. However the affect is mediated by the rural geographic locale she is describing. Distinct from Waitt and Lane’s (2007) findings that suggest road surfaces animate engagements with geographic places in situ, here Lynne’s narrative foregrounds the road surface as already part

of an imagined 'rural' place to be anticipated, accommodated and embraced. Lynne brings the experience of the road surface into her broader understanding of using rural road space, suggesting that she constructs her 'driver-car' performance relationally through both her body and the road surface. That perception of experience is further mitigated by notions of discursive rural, which perpetuate the surface as a facet of rural experience. This illustrates how aspects of the road come to be understood through the 'driver-car' experience, but can also be discursively mediated.

However the road surface is endured in unequal ways. Materially the surface can be understood as dynamic, but the way the surface also serves as a communicative medium, dependent on the geographical specificities of the road, is equally, if not more important. A return to the video is necessary (see, *Extract 4.4*) since it illustrates how the location of the potholes and puddles are key. Why endure the potholes when the road is wide enough to avoid them? Mike could have just taken a more central position. However, the white line asserts its influence. The white line reminds the driver-car of the UK regulatory frameworks around driving on the left and staying within the correct lane. Centre lines are empowered to regulate the driver-car uniformly, because they are representative of the statutory frameworks that surround road usage, documented in such publications as 'The Highway Code' (Driving Standards Agency, 2007). Thus road surfaces communicate. This is not to be confused with Ingold's (2007a) notion of 'communicative lines', rather road surfaces communicate through the way that they're marked with signs, symbols and white, yellow or red painted lines, to convey meaning to drivers (who are trained to interpret them). Just as signs and signals in the road surrounds (discussed earlier) can be understood through Foucault's notion of 'discipline' as regulating the driver-car, so can the communicative surface of the road. Foucault's (1977) first notion of power is based on recognising where boundaries are visible to the individual, and as Gregory (2000: 810) explains, "the regulation of space provided for the 'normalisation' of the subject". Individuals become 'normalised' in subjectively producing their 'driver-car' encounters with space, being collectively subject to the road's communicative signs that serve to represent the power of laws established to regulate driving practices. As such, inscriptions upon the road surface communicate and discipline automobility, arguably co-producing the driver-car performance between the road space being driven and the driver's understanding of the symbolic language the road exhibits. For Ingold, such surface inscriptions are integral to the power of the material ('channelling') line:

'surfaces are themselves constituted by guidelines that can be more or less constraining ... The centre line separates oncoming and outgoing traffic, and to drive 'on the wrong side' is to precipitate an accident. But it is still possible –if dangerous – for the motorists to cross over, such as when overtaking' (Ingold, 2007a:160).

Inscribed lines on the road surface, as Ingold alludes to, are not physical boundaries, but restraint is performatively exercised in the driver-car relationality with the road. Thus, in demarcating lanes on the road, Mike remains driving through the potholes, disciplined to the left by the communicative power of the road surface's central white line.

Moreover, the advent of disciplining lines can disrupt practiced road spaces. Rita, a rural resident and former rural to urban commuter felt strongly about the arrival of lines to the road spaces she had previously endured her commute driving upon:

“now there are far more lines drawn on roads so it's more difficult in many cases to overtake because the car in front of you is abiding by these lines and in the past they used to get over and then you could zoom around. And so I feel, certainly coming down from Fox House and then along, further along, into Hathersage, you've got whole lots of lines on the road that you never used to have at all. And there's traffic lights now in places where there never used to be. So you know there's a great deal more regulation around here, even around here” (Rita).

The road surface itself had remained unchanged, except for the addition of white lines to its surface, but Rita was impassioned about what the lines implied for her performance of driving. In spaces she, or others, may have previously made the decision to venture out from behind and overtake, the advent of lines onto the road surface inhibits her autonomy to make those decisions. Moreover, the ‘normalisation’ (*ibid.*) of the driver is illustrated through Rita's acknowledgement of self-surveillance (Foucault, 1977); whereby she is performing her rural driving influenced by the compliance of others. The white line creates a threshold that arguably the driver-car must consciously negotiate the notion of ‘transgression’ in order to overtake. Linking back to discussion of surrounds, Rita's narrative connects the disciplining effect of lines on the road with the architectures of control found in the road surrounds: lines and traffic signals are equivocal ‘regulation’ affecting her driving performance. Furthermore, and most notably for the thesis, she positions the regulation of rural roads she drives at a discord with her understanding of the space. Her implication is that an increased regulation of the road nuances performative engagements with it, but in a way that is unnecessary for her notion of what the rural road requires. The increased communication back from the road is, for her, incongruent with her established taskscape of rural engagement through the car.

Where the car interfaces with the road is at the surface; surfaces become practiced in terms of their tactile dimension and their communicative power. This communicative power to discipline the driver-car holds more performative influence than the nuances in surface scree, potholes or rain; as can be argued through the data above. The everyday embeddedness of road surface regulatory power is inevitably integral to the ‘driver-car’ production of ‘roadscape’, since it is the road that defines the encounter with rural space. By extension, the roadscape individuals produce should therefore always be situated within the

regulatory context through which they emerge. Thus, the communicative power of the road disciplining the driver-car is orchestrated from a national-scale of road space governance, re-emphasising Edensor's (2007) point for the national scale being key to negotiate in order to unpack situated driving practices, both in legal and cultural contexts.

4.4 Occupying Roads

This discussion aims to illustrate the interconnections between the themes drawn out above. A reflexive word on the methodological approach is however necessary here. There is inevitably some methodological affect at work to set rural roads up as distinct spaces, given the research agenda explicitly asked participants to think through the rural spaces that they frequent; thus setting up the rural as a discrete space. However, I maintain that the approach taken, and conceptual framework adopted, leaves the definition of what is rural *per se* to the participant.

Moreover, whilst it's productive to theoretically unpack the data within the themes discussed above, in practice each aspect inevitably overlaps. This is none more acutely expressed than when Tarek was discussing his driving on rural roads:

"no traffic lights, there's not very, rarely you come across traffic lights. And it's just the scenery basically. The scenery's breathtaking, not that I see it all the time because I'm driving but it's nice yeah. And the roads are not too bad, they're not too windy, they're good roads, well maintained roads" (Tarek).

The surrounds, the surface and the shape are all integral to Tarek's conceptualisation of 'rural' roads that he has accrued through years of driving to reach rural destinations from his house in Sheffield. For Tarek, the rural road is constructed differently in some dimensions ('shape') and the same in others (surface) to other users of the same roads. Similarly, Beth's narrative highlights how the various dimensions of road negotiation may be recognised collectively, but in practice can each be given different priority:

"there's a lovely bit of ... [road] ...between Chapel and Sheffield and there it's really gnarly, really bumpy land, like a very rough road. And it's absolutely covered in cowslips. I've never seen anything like it. So that you know, I wouldn't necessarily choose to drive on that road because of that, but it certainly enhances the otherwise tedious drive" (Beth).

Here she highlights how the value of the road is seen in the surrounds, with the shape less resonant. Furthermore, the entanglement of road dimensions is further emphasised as subjective and geographically contingent in practice when Shaun recalls the impact a surface has on his driving to and from Rowsely village:

"you have to go round the hair pins and it's so steep that the road surface's become jagged because when the snow ploughs have gone up they've actually dug into the tarmac and dug gouges out of it. So to avoid that you have to go right into the middle of the road and then if there's anything

coming the other way, and you're struggling to slow down because it's a very steep hill" (Shaun).

Shaun's recounting of this road captures the interplay of enduring the surface through the car and the vertical and horizontal shape as they manifest in practice. The steep hill engenders surface challenges from other vehicles that have frequented the road to clear it of snow, making the surface uneven. But the consequence of these road conditions mean that he performs driving the road in relation to the other road users. His driver-car positioning on the road to navigate around the road shape is contingent upon the road's surface, but crucially, also other driver-cars that may be occupying that road space.

Thinking through how all these elements come together in nuanced, situated encounters is a vital step to frame the final theme. These roadscape of driving in the Peak District are subjective, situated and relationally constructed through the roads these individuals frequent. They emphasise that the rural road comes to be imaginatively and performatively reproduced as distinct. But so far discussion has focused on unpacking the dimensions of the road and how they're individually experienced. As Shaun's data has gestured at above, how the rural road comes to be practiced both through these themes and amongst others is key to understanding subjective, productions of rural engagement through roads. Hence I will now turn to considering the sociality of the road here in the penultimate section to the chapter, before consolidating the salient themes in the conclusion.

4.4.1 Sharing

Roads are spaces of driver-car practice socially constituted through the collective of users that engage with them. The rural road plays host to a multitude of users within the same space:

"there are a lot of people on the road and there's campers walking along, mountain bikers, road bikers who seem to want to ride three or four abreast, horse riders, farmers, there's all sorts of people on trying to use. There's a lot of potential for accidents" (Beth).

In highlighting the users, Beth illustrates the first challenge the rural road is presented with; the diversity of individuals claiming space within it. The 'potential for accidents' results from the mix of users and arguably the speed differentials between them. But she also gestures at the issue of space in the road, a key finding triangulated with the video data depicting a car meandering around two slower-speed cyclists:

Extract 4.5: Sharing

In moments of sharing the roadscape, the material road's space can be understood as integral to the sharing performances that ensue. The car's power becomes overwhelmingly apparent both in terms of speed differentials and material being in the environment. The car moves out and across the carriageway to pass the cyclists with enough space so as not to impede their progress, but in doing so blocks the width of the road and has transgressed into the oncoming lane (although there is no white line to demarcate that, the driving performance disciplined to the left endures). The rural road is a site of a complex mix of vehicle types and

human and non-human users. The road, where each user may want to be mobile, demands socially negotiated *sharing* within it.

These findings challenge the literature that emphasises road spaces are predominantly conceived as car spaces (Merriman, 2009). Cars' hegemony over road space serves as a critical backdrop to *sharing*:

“Non-motorised traffic has been marginalised and at times excluded from the busiest roads, leading anti-car campaigners to critique the privatisation of public road-space, and geographers such as Ronald Horvath to identify the expansion and encroachment of ‘automobile territory’ and ‘machine space’ on ‘people space’ (Horvath, 1974: 168, *cited in* Merriman, 2009: 587).

Horvath's (1974) notions of machine and people space are useful for conceptualising how people question the hegemony of the car on ‘rural’ roads. In the first instance, this could be because rural discourse is, in part, shaped by representations of rurality as both people-less and machine-less (or at least car-less) spaces. Moreover, when rurality is represented with roads visible, the absence of car machine(s) is palpable (see, *Figure One*). Machine space and people space are arguably silenced in discursive ruralities. So instead of the rural road being set up as car space, arguably the rural road's ownership is more unstable. Thus, when in practice, the data suggests that the presence of the other road users in the roadscape of the driver-car generates ruptures of tension, arguably this is because other road users are absent in imaginative notions of the rural road. Tension also resonates arguably as the rural road is



Figure 4.1: Shell Guide to the Roads of Britain (*Museum of English Rural Life, 2011c*)

the space that could offer the driver-car solitary encounters with the countryside, just as the people-less and machine-less discourse perpetuates rurality as being, but in practice other road users are present. Finally, materially, roads in rural areas engender moments of proximity as it is shared between users due to the material volume of the road space. There is a spatial constriction in practice that is juxtaposed by the discursive construction of the road as empty, un-peopled and free driving space. Thus ultimately, notions of rurality serve to unsettle any established contentions that roads are conceived as predominantly car spaces in rurality (and arguably more broadly) since discourse and material spaces of rural roads challenge how that dominance can work in practice.

Still, sharing of road space is a subjective, situated performance where uses of the road can be articulated through dominant imaginaries of rural space. These imaginaries of rural space, however, come to be appropriated in practice in different ways. Consequently, a politics of rural road ownership comes to the fore, bringing into question the mobilities paradigm's assumption of automobility dominating road space (Sheller and Urry, 2000). For example, Natalie's expectation is for rural road space to function as shared space: *"the urban motorists are taking their view of ownership of the road into the countryside which makes all the more dangerous for horse-riders, for cyclists, for pedestrians"*. Here Natalie uses a geographical referent to set rural roads up as requiring distinct performances from those exhibited by urban driving visitors to rural roads. Her narrative reflects her agitation as a cyclist, and a driver, based on an expectation that the rural road functions as more than car space. However, in her recounting of practice, she experiences the road as dominated by cars – a subtle, but vital, distinction to the mobilities paradigm assumption of car hegemony. Automobility may dominate road spaces, but for some individuals, in some (rural) road spaces, roads are not car spaces *per se*. Moreover, the notion of 'ownership' emphasises a politics at play in the space of the roadscape. To socially accommodate other road users, nuances to driver-car and road relationality are required in the constricted volume of space the rural road offers. When driver-car performances are incongruent with Natalie's conceptualisation of what using the rural road entails, she derides those performances for not understanding the rural road how she does. It is the perception and experience of how these politics play out that animates the data on using rural roads:

"you find that cars come very close to you, they're very aggressive, particularly in the countryside. And it's a real paradox because people come to the countryside presumably for a relaxing time and yet they're so aggressive and so determined to get where they want to go and that you're holding them up that they, they, they engage in quite risky behaviours. But it's not risky for them, it's risky for the other people who are trying to use the road. Because when you're in a car and you've got your safety belt on and you've got a metal box around you you're actually quite safe and secure. But other people that you have to share the road with are not

necessarily in that position. And it's almost as if people tend to treat cyclists as they would other cars" (Lisa).

For Lisa, like Natalie and similarly speaking through her identity as a cyclist, the rural road is a site of conflicting (mobile) performances. The speed differential between mobile users in the road is performatively problematic for her as she embodies the movement of the road space. Lisa explains this through citing how different users have differing degrees of bodily protection, but, in her experience, the driver-car does not performatively accommodate that in their use of the road. Being driven too close to by a car whilst she is cycling has led to the rural road becoming a taskscape of tensions that she endures. Resonating through Lisa's data is an imaginary of the rural road that irks with her enduring taskscape; her experience of these tensions leads her to identify a 'paradox' of rural road performances. This paradox Lisa perceives has its basis in material differences: the spatial proximity the rural road necessitates, thus putting her closer to cars; and, the protection offered to the driver-car body in comparison to other road users. Her narrative sets the car up against the social, material and cultural norms she holds about rural road spaces; the effect being externalisation of the car from her (idealised) notion of what 'rural' space entails. Thus, the notion of 'rural' is being appropriated to comprehend performances of others and ultimately problematise rural road practice *per se*.

Yet for other participants, sharing manifests with different elements of tension. Robert has a nuanced notion of rural road space *sharing* to that of Lisa, such that his data captures how others in the rural road is experienced subjectively in practice:

"you start to compare yourself with other road users. You know the damn cyclists wobbling all over the road. Motorcyclists that are chasing around and you think less about the countryside, the landscape, and more about the other wretched road users" (Robert).

Robert, although adopting an alpha-male superiority in talking within a focus group of peers, he emphasises his surety of being a driver-car to using the rural road as he practices it. The tensions in ownership of the road resonate in his experience, formulated now as memories of the roads he uses (Dant, 2004). He assumes the roads are for cars, with other users maligned, placing the driver-car as top of the hierarchy in his imaginary of road space. He sets up the rural road as embedded within the landscape and a means to achieve an engagement with the countryside. Consequently, framing the road in this manner means when encountering other road users that are not cars he begins to devalue the rural road as a space. For Robert, *sharing* the rural road negates its experiential value. Arguably this serves as an acute example of how the rural road comes to be performatively negotiated by the driver-car with situated imaginaries of rural space appropriated in practice.

The rural road becomes a site of conflict because it physically and materially manifests as distinct. But it is also problematised, the data suggests by being discursively constructed as distinct road space. On the one hand there's a romanticised rendering of the rural road as un-peopled, picturesque scenery to engage with through the car (see, *Figure One*), and on the other, a space that exists with less regulatory architectures on the road surface or in the road surrounds (see, earlier discussion). Moreover, the rural road emerges as produced as a space of multiple users – both imaginatively and in practice. Thus, when roads embody a 'rural' aesthetic (subjectively defined), the expectation is for nuanced social practices of driving to ensue. Lastly, *sharing* is relationally produced in the moments of proximity between users in the rural road in performances, albeit in distinctly different ways, reproduce dominant discursive notions of rurality in practice.

4.5. Making In/Roads

What we need to know about the way values of rural circulate in performances of engaging with rural spaces can be understood through how people come to position the rural road and negotiate its material and discursive capacities in practice. Roads are made through performance – the meaning of 'road' is situated, produced and maintained as a taskscape through the enduring capacity of road users performing engagement with space. Thus the chapter has unfolded towards two key contributions. The first is emphasising how rural space as performatively practiced through the car must always be routed through critical reflection on the road. Secondly, and more broadly, through focusing on engagements with roads, driving performances illustrate values about rurality *per se*. How the rural road is performed, therefore, shapes the way rural space is produced in practice.

The road is the conduit that defines driving as countryside driving and makes the encounter one of a 'rural' engagement. It is the road that takes you there, or through it. The road shapes the way that you can move the car and how the car is moved, and ultimately serves as the spatial basis for the enduring performances that I progress to discuss in the subsequent chapters. The surrounds, the shape, the surface are all attributes of the material road that have resonance in practice, as analysis of the social dimensions of the rural road, through the framing of 'shared', has demonstrated. The negotiation of these road facets is subjective, situated and temporally contingent, but through collective practices coheres as the normative construction of the rural road. What these themes demonstrate is how there is a lot to be gained from taking the (rural) road seriously. Moreover, it reminds that the car is not the only thing moving in producing automobility. Movement is happening all around and amongst the car as it navigates along the road – the occupants and driver are animate – but beyond the car is alive too, with motion and change evident in the road space that manifests across varied time and space scales.

Thus roads are more than two-dimensional lines across the landscape (Ingold, 2007a); and the chapter empirically illustrates the importance of roads' three-dimensionality in the performance of driving. But it does this against a backdrop of using Dant's (2004) notion of the 'driver-car'. Through data presented here, I would suggest that empirical applications of this notion require a spatial referent. Arguably the inherent relationality between the 'driver-car' and the road necessitates nuancing the notion to 'driver-car-road' for the remainder of the thesis. The road, as I have illustrated, is an enduring material and imaginative context that shapes performances in rural space.

Throughout this opening empirical chapter I have sought to develop the language for unpacking the dimensions of meaning, competence and materiality of enduring rural driving performances that accrue as practice (Shove and Panzar, 2005). What this discussion suggests is that there are a myriad of subjectivities that occupy the driving of rural roads, and the subsequent engagement with space the performances engender. By intricately unravelling some of these narratives of performance, the way that enduring values of rural space shape the meaning of rural driving has been illuminated. The material dimension of the road has been repeatedly shown as integral to shaping situated driving performances. Moreover, practical skills (driving bends, or closely with other road users) can be recognised as integral to what may emerge through the thesis as belonging to a form of driving particularly produced within and through material and imaginative rural spaces. However, here forms only the part of the dynamic ways in which rural engagement through the car comes to be practiced in distinct, geographically contingent ways. This is an endeavour that is taken up in the next chapter, and ultimately is consolidated within the thesis conclusion.

· 5 ·

RHYTHM

5.1 Taking a Moment

“if I’ve got the time, you know even if it’s a regular route, I’ll get to the bottom of the road and oh left or right, and just make my mind up on the spur of the moment” (Ed).

That *moment* Ed describes is a complex, situated engagement with the temporalities woven through his driver-car-road taskscape. The ‘spur’ is a pointed, liminal juncture recurrently negotiated as his drive unfolds. He is the maker of his performative time, and if he conceives time available, for him, the rural road offers opportunity to write his route in that *moment*. His performance positions temporalities of rural engagement as always in flux between his drive’s purpose and the road available to him. Yet, by bringing time to the fore not as an organising principle but an opportunity, Ed’s moment illustrates the key intersection of time and space in practice:

“since people engage in many practices (during a day, a year or a lifetime), any discussion of the temporal texture of daily life has to take account of how practices intersect in time and in space” (Shove, 2009: 18).

Thus, Ed’s performance acutely brings to the fore how moments of rural spatial engagement are inherently bound by temporal registers. In that moment, the spatial is shaped through the temporal, performances producing the landscape of driving practice are shaped by the inherent “temporal texture of daily life” (Shove, 2009). Though those temporal dimensions he gestures at are ephemeral, Ed highlights the situatedness of time in practice.

Time, in terms of Schatkian practice theory, is to be understood as endowing practices with ‘dimensionality’ (Schatzki, 2001). That is to reject notions of clock-time, and to conceive of each ‘moment’ as inherently embedded in the doing of everyday life in somatic, haptic, diurnal and circadian scales of practices. Following Ingold’s (1993, 2001) taskscape notion, time is similarly understood as myriad. The taskscape is composed through the rhythms that individuals entangle into their performances, as Jones’ (2010) work on tidal rhythms in everyday life has shown. Thinking through the taskscape, then unravelling the temporal dimensions it embodies, can enable paying attention to the inherent rhythms embedded in its production. To attend to the rhythmic, therefore, is to begin to unravel temporalities in the taskscape that shape practice, but don’t necessarily exist in objective

time framings. Moreover, paying attention to the rhythmic enriches the understanding of practice that the thesis offers.

This is key for studies of mobility too, given that automobilities manifest through multiple, interconnected temporalities:

‘Mobility is not secondary to the events of spacing and timing, rather the unfolding of events is characterised by prepositioning and turbulence, and by material, experiential and relational effects of spacing, timing, movement, sensation, energy affect, rhythm and force. This unfolding is manifested not in multiple socialised neo-Euclidean or neo-Cartesian space-times, but rather in the eruption of movement-spaces, rhythmic-movements, energetic space-times, movement-affect-space-times etc’ (Merriman, 2012: 21-22).

In highlighting a myriad of ‘unfolding’ temporalities that emerge beyond objective understandings of time, Merriman scopes out the potential temporal dynamics that could shape rural driving performances, and how these can be conceived through the notion of rhythm.

Thus this chapter is about interrogating the way that time is fundamentally enfolded amongst rural driving performances, through a framing that adopts rhythm as a foundational concept. Embedded in the negotiation of the space-time of countryside driving are intimate and innate rhythms that emerge as having important resonances within the practice. Building on the previous chapter’s discussion of the importance of the roadspace, this chapter takes its empirical starting point recognising the dimensions of temporality that animate the data. Through three key empirical themes, I explore how various geographical and temporal scales are intimately bound up in the experience of rural driving. Firstly I discuss the importance of seasonal rhythms in a rural driving context, before turning to consider weekly rhythms, teasing out the inherent visual primacy that articulations of these rhythms embody. Next, the empirical discussion attends to unpacking aural rhythms and their embeddedness within performances. This discussion illuminates how rhythms come to resonate in somatic and haptic registers, enlivening the taskscape with the bodies of those engaged in producing rural space. Then, the penultimate section focuses on positioning the empirical findings against the broader question of rural engagement, to unpack how rhythms of rurality performatively manifest. Lastly, the chapter offers a summation of the progression made across it to conclude that conceptualising through notions of rhythm captures, and enables articulation of, the temporal patterns of rural driving practice.

5.2 Placing Time in the Frame

As Ed’s performance highlights, to conceive time as solely objective is to deny the complex way in which time is subjectively understood and performatively negotiated. The notion of ‘temporality’ (Ingold, 1993; 2001) was set against Schatzkian Practice Theory in the earlier

conceptual framework chapter. However, here I tease out the key notions that can be theoretically mobilised in discussion of the data, and in doing so also introduce the concept of rhythm.

Firstly, the negotiation of time should be understood as intimately traversed in subjective performances that transcend one-dimensional framings of the temporal. Schatzki (2010: 102) makes this clear when he notes that “human activity at once occurs in objective time, copes with objective space and opens timespace”. For Schatzki, ‘timespaces’ are the subjective negotiations of temporality that take place within the enacting of social practices. In positioning time as having inherent ‘dimensionality’ (Schatzki, 2001), multiplicity and inherent fluidity, time, rather than understood merely as objective, is to be positioned as negotiated and produced through subjective performance of practices.

It is a position that can be understood as shared with Ingold (1993: 159), when he states, “the notion that we can stand aside and observe the passage of time is founded upon an illusion of disembodiment”. By always grounding the performance of engaging with space through the body, Ingold reminds that time must always be conceived through the forms the body engages with. Time, therefore, should be understood as folded into the way practices are played out in and amongst a multitude of equally competing spatio-temporal phenomena. A sentiment captured in short when Shove (2009: 17) notes, “practices make time”. Ed’s negotiation of time in the moment he selects his route illustrates the concept acutely; whereby time comes to be conceived as negotiated, produced through situated performances rather than objectively and linearly organising those performances.

Time, for Ingold (1993; 2001), is conceived as temporality. Temporality means “the present is not marked off from a past that it has replaced or a future that it will, in turn replace; it rather gathers the past and future into itself” (Ingold, 1993; 159). Thus, each ‘moment’, Ingold argues, the landscape is never static, always dynamic, alive and in movement through the referencing that subjective understanding and enacting of performance necessitates. Simplistically, to know what to do, there needs to be some embodied reference of how to compose oneself, which arguably comes from embodied memory. Similarly, Ingold’s taskscape notion (discussed in the conceptual framework) emphasises the temporality of the spatial engagement each subjective encounter with (rural) space engenders. The taskscape lends itself to thinking time as ‘dimensional’, akin to Schatzki too, since temporality is inherently manifold in and through situated performances.

Yet, rather than just thinking about the emergent subjective temporalities that are integral to the drive as a situated taskscape, it is useful to consider how temporal traces cohere intersubjectively. For Schatzki (2010: 65), a continuation of ‘timespace’ is sufficient more broadly, in that “interwoven timespaces form an infrastructure that runs through and is essential to social affairs”. But this ‘infrastructure’ needs to be more delicately unpacked,

beyond the affordances that a Schatzkian approach offers. This is where the notion of rhythm presents much critical purchase.

Edensor's (2010a) edited collection illustrates how geographers are finding the Lefebvrian notion of 'rhythmanalysis' particularly useful for unravelling the inherent temporalities of everyday life. Thinking through the temporal in terms of rhythm has broad potential:

“rhythmanalysis, placed in the broader context of time-geography, can contribute to the temporal understanding of place and space. Here, the cultural experience and social understandings of time must be conceived as dynamic, multiple and heterogeneous [...] rhythmanalysis is particularly useful in investigating the patterning of a range of multi-scalar temporalities – calendrical, diurnal and lunar, lifecycle, somatic and mechanical – whose rhythms provide an important constituent of the experience and organisation of social time” (Edensor, 2010b: 1).

Rhythmanalysis emphasises time as decoupled from clock time and inherently contingent. Rhythms are understood as socially cohering patterns of temporality that are evident in the everyday. Various physical, natural, social and fabricated, dimensions offer rhythmic shape to everyday life. In the framing of rhythm, 'timespaces' are abundant; understood as legible through the patterns of performance(s). In Schatzkian terms, arguably rhythm is the architecture akin to the 'infrastructure' of entangled practice 'timespaces'. Whilst 'timespaces' extend further than, and are not bound to being embedded in, rhythm, timespaces can be understood as constitutive of rhythms.

From herein I adopt rhythm as a conceptual framing as it enables distinctive analytical insights. Rhythms are conceived as expressions of temporality that cohere within subjective taskscapes. By opening up the engagement with rural space through the drive, the data are illustrative of the 'dimensionality' inherent in practice (Schatzki, 2001) and 'temporality' (Ingold, 1993; 2001) of each participant's rural production. Herein, the analysis takes these key concepts of 'timespace', 'temporality' and 'rhythm' into exploration of the rural driving practice's 'dimensionality'.

5.3 Performative Rhythms

What develops in the analysis presented below is the role of rhythm as a notion for bringing together subjective dimensions of rural driving performances. Firstly I reflect on the way that seasonal rhythms emerge as imperative, both experientially for participants' landscape production, and in shaping where they go. I then turn to drawing out the way weekly and diurnal rhythms shape rural driving. In the latter section I analyse the aural rhythms that the car environment provides, and how they too come to be embedded in the performance of countryside driving.

5.3.1 Seasonal Rhythms

Annual cycles in temperate climates, such as the UK, offer four distinguishable seasons. Climatically, seasons vary in temperature, precipitation and circadian rhythms of night and day. Bodies must endure the changes in temperature, winds, humidity and light, with the car environment variously adaptable dependent on the time of year. Flora and fauna shift their activity with the progression of seasonal rhythms. Seasons can be recognised visibly – flora flourishes in summer, drops leaves, are harvested and die back in autumn, are largely dormant over the winter, then a re-emergence of greenery prevails in spring – as well as in more embodied registers. Some dimensions of these rhythms of the seasons mattered for performances of driving engaging with the rural. The following data are key examples from the depth of information around the way people connect with the rural landscape through seasonal rhythms.

Participants used seasonal rhythms to demonstrate their familiarity and frequency with which they engaged with the countryside. For example, Robert's description suggests his enduring routes are understood through the seasonal rhythms the roads embody, *"going to Derbyshire where you're going over the same old ground that you see every weekend and you experience this changing of seasons"*. The sense of annual rhythms animating rural space is echoed in Ed's narrative too: *"it's just the absolutely beautiful countryside that we've got on our doorstep and at different times of year seeing it in different ways as well through all the seasons"* (Ed). For Robert and Ed, the familiarity they experience in the landscape, owing arguably to the 'surrounds' of the road (see previous chapter), animates the driving performance through engaging with an annual dynamism. They use the seasons to emphasise familiarity with the rural, illustrating the way each performative engagement with the (rural) landscape is produced within the temporalities of the previous (and arguably future) landscape of the road 'surrounds' in the routes that they frequent. Notably, to discuss the seasons emerged as a trope for connection to the rural landscape, whereby narrating a seasonal connection was a means to illustrate attentiveness to annual rhythms that animate the landscape.

Moreover, seasonal rhythms are embraced in the unfolding of routes in subjective driving performances. As Anne's description of her route suggests (linking with Robert's sentiments discussed earlier), the route taken when driving can be about connecting with seasonal rhythms:

"I have regular routes, scenic routes that I like to travel along on a regular basis, especially at the different times of the year because the same route changes with the seasons" (Anne).

By frequenting 'regular routes' Anne's connection to seasonal rhythms has spatial resonances in practice. Her enduring rural driving performances can be understood as

inherently produced through the ‘timespace’ of practice. Opting to take particular roads so that she can gain connection with those seasonal changes that she values is illustrative of the power of calendrical rhythms within countryside driving performances. The seasonal rhythms Anne focuses on are visual engagements with the road surrounds, whereas when Mark talks about living and being mobile in the Peak District seasonal rhythms are socially produced:

“obviously living in the Peak District bank holidays, some weekends are horrendously busy so if I was, depending on the time of year, I’d vary my route to avoid busy areas like driving through tourist traps” (Mark).

Mark highlights how seasonal rhythms of tourist flows effect how he navigates countryside space. Thus seasonal rhythms have a two-fold resonance in the performances of these rural drivers. The time of year may attract visitors to the Peak District but as a consequence this becomes embedded in residents’ uses of the space, whilst they try to disconnect themselves from the social dimensions of seasonality. Traffic and tensions on the road (see previous chapter) create moments of friction, and from Mark’s data, being in tune with the affects of seasonal rhythms of tourists, he opts to avoid the season being disruptive to his mobility. Thus for Anne and Mark, routes are emergent from salient rhythms, the temporality of the season in both social and natural dimensions, such that they incorporate them into their subjective driving taskscapes.

Notably, there is an absence in the data of discussion of seasonal rhythms as they come to be embodied. As I outlined above, seasons offer annual variance that the body must endure. The absence of data on the embodied dimensions of seasonal rhythms arguably should be reflected on through the material lens the car is offering into rural engagement practices. Cars are climate-controlled personal oases (see, Waitt and Lane, 2008) protecting the driver-car-road production of space from the nuances in weather that the seasonal rhythms engender.

5.3.2 Weekly Rhythms

The second key rhythm to draw out is the role of the weekly time frame, and the daily rhythms that compose it. The week as an organising rhythm offers discrete, enduring framings for each twenty-four hour cycle of time. Weeks are composites of these seven daily rhythms that arguably cohere as a meta-rhythm holding together the comprehension of the circadian rhythms of everyday life. Days emerged as key scales through which participants produced their rural driving taskscapes. Moreover, days emerge as having distinct characteristics. But arguably days are articulations of temporality within the understanding of the ‘temporal texture of everyday life’ (Shove, 2009: 18) as composed through the rhythm of the week.

Connecting and extending the analysis above, weekly rhythms emerge as social negotiations of other people being (anticipated) in rural space, articulated through reference to the day of the week:

“it makes a heck of a difference which day of the week you go. If you go mid-week (as my walking group does) there’s far less traffic around than if you go on a Sunday. Sunday’s getting horrendous in my view [...] from the point of view of avoiding the motorbikes, avoiding the crowds of tourists and mid-week it’s relatively light. [...] driving is less stressful” (Robert).

Robert, who is retired, is able to frequent the countryside mid-week, resulting in him experiencing rural space on a Sunday negatively because he produces rural space with the presence of other cars and road users as ‘horrendous’. The presence of ‘motorbikes’ or ‘tourists’, leaves him resolute that rural space is preferable to drive through mid-week. Liam, on the other hand, working full-time long hours in Sheffield, doesn’t have the option to drive rural space mid-week:

“we prefer going out on a Saturday, funnily enough its quieter than a Sunday. A lot of people tend to go for a walk then I don’t know if other people have told you that or not. Saturday afternoons are often, once you get off the beaten track, they are quite quiet. People often have things to do on a Saturday, Sundays can often be busier” (Liam).

But, with different motivations, he too avoids Sunday driving, preferring Saturday to reach spaces that are ‘quite quiet’. His performance highlights how the presence of other people in his engagement with rurality is problematic due to the rhythms of others. Both of these participants frame Sunday as problematic. Weekly leisure cycles emerge as negotiating the temporalities of other rural space users and the week is negotiated as a rhythmic cycle of ‘timespace’ (Schatzki, 2011). Moreover, this empirically illustrates Ingold’s argument that:

“the temporality of the taskscape is social, then, not because society provides an external frame against which particular tasks find independent measure, but because people, in the performance of their tasks, also attend to one another” [author’s emphasis] (Ingold, 1993:159).

Weekly rhythms, articulated through the days of the week, illuminate how socially reproduced rhythms of practice shape subjective performances. In acknowledging the other road users, both Robert and Liam demonstrate that their presence is embedded within the temporality of their subjective driving taskscapes.

Moreover, these social rhythms have geographical implications too. This can be understood from Liam’s performance (above), in that his route is chosen through a negotiation of others being present in the road space on a Saturday afternoon. That the rhythms of others come to shape subjective performances spatially is also key:

“if you just want to get to Bakewell from here and you want to go on a Saturday morning, the last way you’d want to go is the straight way through Matlock because you’ll just get stuck in Matlock for twenty minutes. So if

you just take a small detour round, probably only adds half a mile on, onto smaller roads then you can be there in half the time” (Shaun).

Actively incorporated into his imaginary of driving through rural space are the rhythms of others’ use of the space, which he anticipates will slow his progress. Shaun speaks through his past experience of rural driving, drawing this into the negotiation of rural space in the present. The moment Shaun’s imagining his taskscape for driving to Bakewell, the ‘timespace’ of performance emerges as integral – the road, the rural town, the weekend – all fold into his rendering of rural driving practice. For Shaun, the presence of other road users that result in him becoming ‘stuck’, mediate his automotive ‘timespace’. In an attempt to reduce the incidence of others holding up his progress, Shaun prefers ‘smaller roads’. Thus other spaces come to the fore to facilitate ‘a small detour’ and in doing so rural driving routes can again be understood as shaped by the weekly rhythms of others.

5.3.3 Aural Rhythms

As a soundscape, the rural drive offers the driver (and car occupants) a space of both interior and exterior sound. Sounds can be heard resonating through the kinetic car; for example, the whirl of the engine, the friction at the car/road interface, the wind passing over the door seals, through open windows or a sunroof, the rattle of occupants and their stuff, the movement they perform and the pushback from the car’s interior in the form of a squeak, a scratch, a clunk-click of a seatbelt, or a spring squashing. Moreover, sounds sourced from the space driven through permeate car spaces too: sounds from the roadscape such as other cars with their whirring engines, honking horns, and car/road interface sounds as they pass by and/or when they brake. Beeping reversing vehicles, birds, livestock, trucks and tractors, machinery harvesting, drilling or cleaning along side road spaces; all occupy roads’ soundscapes. Whilst I recognise the embeddedness of these (and others) in the car soundscape, initially I want to draw distinction from these mundane noises, to focus in on the sounds that come to be selected by drivers in their rural drive performances. This is not to deny that they too have rhythmic resonance, but the salient aural rhythms participants engaged with were through the car stereo.

There have been several key works on car driving and music (Bull, 2007; Basmajian; 2009) that propagate driving as augmented in acoustic registers. These works focus on the way that sound creates an ‘affective atmosphere’ (Bissell, 2010a) and thus resonates in practices of driving the car. However what this literature doesn’t explicitly attend to is how aural rhythms, particularly those offered through the materiality of the car and its stereo, can be understood as rhythms *per se*; that is as temporal dimensions to practice that are powerful within the organisation, performance and perception of driving.

By positioning the data as comprehensible through the notion of rhythm, the research expands on these works.

Sound through a car stereo arguably always has discernible rhythm. It may manifest in one of two rhythmic forms: either music produced to tempo (often) with an audible rhythm; or non-musical, such as voice, which necessitates rhythm to be recognised and comprehended as language. For sounds selected through the stereo, various rhythmic scales are negotiated within the audible moment, and more broadly. Specifically, from the tempo of a track, to the turn taking of a play, through to the structuring of news bulletins, the sound the stereo offers can be understood as offering *audible* rhythm in some capacity. More broadly, take the radio for example. It is produced predominantly over weekly time schedules of repeated shows, and also in terms of circadian rhythms of which sounds are broadcast when. Familiarity with a radio station can offer a means to tell the time of day without engaging with hours and minutes, rather through what is sounding out at any given point. At six pm Radio Four play the chimes of Big Ben; for an hour from five pm on a Friday Radio One play upbeat vintage dance tracks; and on Saturday afternoon sports of the day are common features on local radio stations across the UK. These radio rhythms come to script the performance of driving in both their presence and absence:

“I do like to keep tabs of the football results on a Saturday and listen to matches if I can [...] Occasionally we’ll listen to radio four but it’s always quite boring I think on a Saturday afternoon. Occasionally we’ll listen to radio two on the way back. Or we’ll plug the i-pod in or listen to a CD. Or [...] our daughter will get nursery rhymes” (Liam).

Liam is discussing how integral to his countryside driving it is that he can engage with weekly sports rhythms. But what he also highlights here is the hierarchy he has for what kinds of rhythms he engages with whilst he’s countryside driving. As it’s a Saturday afternoon, his preference is for being connected to the sport that he’s interested in, so although he’s performing the ‘family man’ role of taking his wife and daughter out of the city to a place for family recreation time together, he uses the soundscape of the car to engage with spatially disconnected rhythms of the football scores. Other auditory rhythms may be adopted, but in choosing to use what he’s playing out of the stereo to be about the time of day, on that day of the week, Liam’s narrative captures how those aural rhythms are representative of other everyday rhythms of social life; the patina of football matches for example. Moreover, he understands the drive itself through the sounds he’d be playing, because he is negotiating other rhythms (football) into his driving taskscape. This again echoes Shove’s (2009) suggestion, for the ‘temporal texture’ woven through situated performances.

Furthermore, in Mark’s discussion of the rare times when he makes longer journeys, he too embeds the radio rhythm as potentially incorporated into his driving performances.

Although he's not talking specifically about rural driving, he similarly recognises temporal variation through dynamic aural rhythms:

"if I've got a long drive and I can listen to radio four and listen to the afternoon play or PM or whatever programme on radio four that normally I wouldn't make time to listen to but because I know I'm going to be in the car for two hours, shorter drives, radio one's the best for songs depending on what time of day it is" (Mark).

Mark's driving performance is negotiated through the radio that offers him opportunity to embellish his experience of temporality. This further links back to Shove (2009:17), insofar as "practices make time"; Mark conceives he 'makes time' through the drive by incorporating the radio rhythm into his driving taskscape. Use of the radio can embed the rhythm of the drive in disconnected rhythms of radio broadcasting across daily and weekly timescales, however it is the way in which these rhythms of sound are given pre-eminence in making meaning of the drive. By focusing on the rhythms at play a more in-depth perspective on the integral rhythms that aide making sense of driving emerge. What becomes apparent is how interconnected radio rhythms are to driving practices. Furthermore, embellishing the driving taskscape with other temporalities can come to be the way that people make sense of taking particular drives at a given time.

In incorporating auditory rhythms to the driver-car-road taskscape, embodied affect is produced in practice. Whilst geographically Nicky's experience is distinct from the research area, her embodied driving performance through the beats of two distinct musical rhythms is revealing:

"last year I was driving around Norfolk which is where I grew up and T Rex came on the radio and I could feel myself driving a little faster than I should have done, but I stopped myself round the country lanes, and I thought I'm having such a time, I'm so enjoying this. And I actually wrote [...] on my Facebook status about you know I'm driving too fast around little lanes in Norfolk listening to T Rex and I feel like I'm 17 again. What was interesting was how many people responded to that and thought it was fab you know. And the next day I said I'm driving more sedately through the wider lanes of Suffolk listening to Rachmaninov" (Nicky).

Here the pace of the music shapes the rhythm of Nicky's performance of the drive. The quote reminds of the import road space holds in rural driving (see previous chapter), while the driver-car-road relationality emerges as negotiated through her aural registers. Excitement and enjoyment are sensations that the upbeat T Rex track, coupled with the constriction of the road space, engender. Speed of the driving performance enmeshes in practice with the auditory pace, whereby the music pushed Nicky's engagement to (exceptionally for her) speed up. There are two dimensions to recognise here in terms of thinking about rhythms. Firstly, music offered Nicky an aspect to the drive that served to augment its everyday performance. But secondly, the advent of music led to the negotiation

of other temporalities; illustrative of how multiple rhythms can be (even if only momentarily) made integral to the practice. Nicky's negotiation of space, sound and performance had affective capacity in an embodied register, with her delighting in the moments of motion; the movement and T Rex track the salient rhythms being negotiated. Consequently, Nicky becomes acutely aware of her own corporeality: when she notes an age, she references her biological clock, or her life rhythms. She incorporates past temporalities of driving in that space to T-Rex and sets these against her performance now. In doing so, Nicky becomes acutely aware of the music rhythm's affect in temporal registers. This data offers an insight into how past and present rhythms of performance are negotiated in practice, but how these rhythms are complex, embodied and multidimensional in the engagement with time *per se*.

Moreover, how aural rhythms are selectively appropriated in situated practices of rural driving can be unravelled further with attention. How individuals hear (and performatively negotiate) aural rhythms in situated and contingent spatialities can be understood through Tacchi's binary notion:

“Radio sound, and sound in general, has the capacity to become foregrounded or backgrounded. To look at a soundscape as some sort of two-dimensional entity, would be to miss the ways in which different sounds appear to integrate to create it” (Tacchi, 1998: 36).

So whilst Tacchi sets up sound as either elected into or neglected, she immediately transcends the dichotomous conceptualisation by emphasising the intertextuality of sounds in the soundscape. If such sound is understood as rhythm, then by extension understanding the rhythmic texture requires recognising that some sounds are selected for articulation through the taskscape. I take from Tacchi's point that performatively negotiating rhythms (and thus 'temporal texture' of practice) is dependent upon subjective, situated attunement to aural registers in the taskscape.

Attuning to the sounds of the car illustrates the multiplicity of rhythmic temporalities subjectively incorporated in to the taskscape. Although there was little discussion of the sounds the car *per se* gives back in the driver-car-road production of rural automobility, this key example illustrates the notion that rhythms can be opted into or out of contingently. The mechanical rhythm of a moving car engine is audible to a greater or lesser extent depending on what the driver is demanding of it, how fast it is turning over, its age, the oil that lubricates its working parts and, crucially, how much the driver is attuned to it. Using the radio can drown out the mechanical whirl that crescendos with acceleration and quietens with a gear change up. But arguably the noise the engine makes is conceived as an aural rhythm integral to situated performances of rural driving:

R: would you ever drive along without the radio or without music on?

S: occasionally for me, only if I'm, how do I say this without incriminating myself, driving probably faster than I should do, because I can listen to the tone of the engine. If you're driving fast it's better to listen to the engine rather than looking at the rev counter. You can get to a changing up point and a changing down point and things like that from just having the engine noise undiluted. And also, yeah that would be it really. But that's very rare, 0.1 percent of the time and it's only on a bit of road that, a particular piece of road on the way home from work that I know very very well." (Shaun).

For Shaun, the space offered by one familiar stretch of rural road gives him opportunity to 'listen to the tone of the engine'. The melody he hears back he takes through his taskscape to nuance the subsequent driving performance. The performance of driver-car-road, for Shaun, is negotiated through the mechanical rhythm of the engine that he engages with aurally when other sounds are 'backgrounded' (Tacchi, 1998). Thus, the aural rhythms shaping these situated moments of driving are simultaneously weaving the mechanical into the 'temporal texture' of his rural taskscape. The temporalities of performance emerge as manifold. Yet, this negotiation occurs against a 'timespace' backdrop that permits this performance. Only at certain times, in that particular place, does the rhythm of the engine get 'foregrounded' (*ibid.*) to the taskscape of rural driving performance. The temporal texture of the engine and the space, just like Nicky suggests with music, augments situated performances. Temporalities are foregrounded to produce subjectively textured taskscapes. What emerges from Shaun's recount of performance is how rural driving practice is inherently polyrhythmic. Moreover his opting into the auditory rhythms of the automobile illustrates how he defines his taskscape in practice.

Furthermore, that aural rhythms are opted into contingently and in situated 'timespaces' is acutely illustrated in the analysis of the data from Beth. For Beth, driving is often based around her role as a parent to two children below school age. Aurally, the car, in her performance, is a space of both acoustic freedom to enjoy the radio and "whack your music up" as she wishes, whilst also a space for introducing her children to "bizarre and off the wall [music] rather than wheels on the bus". As a soundscape, Beth prioritised the sound she augments her drive with, and the car stereo's radio plays a key role for her. Her video data captures the aural rhythms within the performance of countryside driving. In watching this extract what emerges is how dominant the beat of the radio track is, both audibly and performatively. The challenge is not to objectify Beth as the data is being viewed, since the soundtrack on this drive can easily be 'foregrounded'. Reflecting on this driving in the post-videoing interview, Beth exclaimed:

"Is that my music? [...] I didn't even notice I had the music on! [...] oh my god I didn't even notice. How weird! [...] normally I'd be singing! [...] or bopping up and down but clearly I was conscious of them recording" (Beth).

Extract 5.1: Aural Rhythms:

But what emerges, for me, whilst watching is how the music enlivens the driving performance tempo, the ebbs and flows of the drive as the corner is turned and then accelerated away from, the movement of the car and the participant appearing in sync with the dulcet tones of the Caro Emerald soundtrack. The looking at the mirror in what seems in time, wiggling the head to the beat, slowing, turning, accelerating; the music tempo embellishes the performance, thus the taskscape, and ultimately the practice. I'm looking at her movements and mannerisms, but critically, I'm drawn into doing so because I too am affected by the beat of the extract. And then there is a methodological challenge, as such

analysis inherently objectifies Beth and her driving, brought into perspective in the context of her reflection on this extract. It is part of the ephemeral nature of the drive in that a song, such as a pop track like this, arrives and departs from the drive in a relatively short space of time. Whilst it is present it offers alternative tempo to the ebbs and flows of the driver-car-road rhythm, but it's affective capacity within the drive holds little value beyond the immediate performances in that moment. So whilst the driver may appear to be engaging with the music, this doesn't endure as Beth's memory of this drive, as admitted in the post-videoing interview. Her surprise when hearing the soundtrack of her drive again was genuine, and her repeated exclamations arguably an expression from realising her memory of that moment had wholly omitted the soundtrack.

And this presents an empirical paradox of import to disentangle. The 'timespace' created by the video methodology affected Beth, whereby she didn't engage with the rhythms of that rural drive in the way she commonly would. Yet I experienced the data differently. So whilst I can suggest that aural rhythms resonate in driving practices, what is learned empirically is how subjective and contingent the resonances are. When aural rhythms afford a particular engagement with other times and spaces (such as sport broadcasting) and/or they're consciously engaged with then they emerge as affective, important and negotiated in performance. This is interesting from an analytical perspective given the in-depth reflection that the video extract I have used here allows, and the way in which the participant received it. I think what it reminds is how reflexive we need to be with video and how attentive to the scripting that participants offer us of their own video. I could continue to expand the argument for the embeddedness of Caro Emerald's soundtrack to Beth's ride to reinforce the contention that sound rhythms are powerful rhythms, but if Beth concedes that she does not even remember them, then the situatedness and contingency of the acoustic, and thus the temporalities that are subjectively incorporated into taskscapes of driving, resonate as a key finding.

5.4 Rhythms of 'Rural'

So what emerges through thinking about 'temporal texture' is how seasonal, weekly and aural rhythms come to shape situated driving practices in distinctive ways. Thinking through the associated rhythms embedded in performance opens up space to begin to question how rurality is produced rhythmically, in the context of each of these rhythms. Thus, in this discussion, I explore how unpacking the performance of seasonal, weekly and aural rhythms offers a lens to further develop understandings of the production of rural space.

The negotiation of rural space emerges as produced through calendrical cycles that are articulated through reference to the seasons. Accommodating seasonal rhythms served to shape engagements with rurality by positioning the seasonal as integral to the production of

rural space *per se*. Participants used seasons as a trope to convey their sense of connection to the unfolding of the landscape through the year. Neil recognises how his perception is bound up with figurative expression, but in doing so illustrates how the rural, for him, is produced through such clichés:

“I know it’s a cliché but if you go regularly in[to] the countryside you see the progression of the seasons [...] you can almost tell what month it is just by looking around you which you don’t always get in the city” (Neil).

Neil equates countryside landscapes with rhythms of seasonality that are more obvious, finding himself better equipped to produce seasonal recognition in rural space than in the city, as though the rural affords engagement with more stark seasonal rhythms. For him, the engagement is visual; ‘seeing’ the seasonal shifts through enduring rural driving performances. Likewise, Nicky echoes this sentiment:

“staying in touch with the seasons. That’s quite important too. [...] it’s one of the things I think I get from visiting the countryside. It’s sort of knowing where I am in the year in terms of natural cycles” (Nicky).

In a similar vein to Neil, Nicky alludes to the way that rural landscape production enables seasonal rhythms to script her perception of annual cycles more broadly. The landscapes she produces whilst frequenting the countryside tap into negotiations of rhythms that she doesn’t necessarily gain from other spaces. Visually engaging with seasons, here, is being used as a proxy for articulating the temporality of annual cycles. But, it is the manner in which the seasons are framed that is also key. Seasons are articulated as ‘natural’ or distinct from (human derived) rhythms of social, cultural and political life. Seasonal rhythms emerge as principal in the perception of rural space as landscape that is dynamic and changeable in ‘natural cycles’. Consequently, producing the rural taskscape emerges, like Halfacree’s (2006: 49) key contention suggests, as ‘negotiating the material and ideational in practice’, albeit comprehensible through these examples as distinctively more complex in how that negotiation plays out in practice.

Weeks resonate in rhythms of rural driving, but how they are appropriated and resisted in various ways illuminates performances of ‘rural’ in practice too. By setting Sunday up as commonly a ‘rural’ day, the notion of Sunday is actively negotiated in practice, including when people were talking about driving on other days. It may be that enduring discourse shapes rural space as ephemerally populated by others on Sundays, but the presence of others on a Sunday endures in practice whether the participants opt to engage with rural space then or not. In terms of performing rurality, again the ‘ideational’ is shaping practice, even if only in a passive sense.

Moreover, these rhythms of the week share a common notion. In constructing the social rhythms of rurality around the week, production of the rural can be understood as, for

some, preferred in an un-peopled format. Thus subjective engagement with rural space, conceptually and in practice, transpires as oft conceived through temporalities of individuals' everyday lives, against a backdrop of their perception of others' practice rhythms. That rhythms of other people are temporally negotiated in situated taskscape could be for a number of reasons. On a pragmatic basis, if it's busy, such as Mark highlights about Matlock, then traffic slows the timespace engagement, potentially with ramifications for other interlinked practices. Other people are navigated around, geographically adapting routes, dependent on annual, weekly and temporal scales. Thus, the weekly rhythms of others are accommodated in subjective taskscape of rural driving. This suggests that the rural is inherently produced through a social negotiation; ironically (but arguably resonant of dominant discursive ruralities), to achieve a less-than-social rural drive.

However it is of course not that simplistic. Throughout the discussion I keep returning to Shove's (2009) notion of 'temporal texture', since at play in the performance of rural engagement are multiple rhythms. This is no more acutely expressed than by Ed's romantic production of rural space through the seasonal and the diurnal: "*right on a Sunday, you know beautiful day, lovely autumn colours and just drive*" (Ed). I refer to this as 'romantic', as for him the production of 'Sunday' is coupled with a drive in rural space *per se*. Such data illustrates the interconnectivity of the temporalities within subjective taskscape. Moreover, for Ed, Sundays are for driving and the social rhythms of others are not brought to the fore in his conception of performing rural engagement.

In exploring the aural rhythms to engaging with the rural, the discussion opens up space for unpacking rural as produced through somatic and haptic registers. Initially it is worthwhile noting how as cars designs and engineering has progressed, cars have become spaces more insulated and isolating from the sounds of their exterior. Against this backdrop, it is interesting to reflect on which sounds are bought into the performance of rural driving and which are denied recognition. In this context, the rural's aural rhythms are those mediated by the car. For Beth, Nicky, Shaun, Mark and Liam, the sounds scripting performance are provided through the driver-car-road interface. They are inherently situated, and suggest the aural augmentation of the taskscape as inherently dependent on the rural locale *per se*, but in terms of the sounds of the rural, little deference is given to anything beyond the car. Aural rhythms of rural driving are indicative of the car materiality shaping the practice, not of rurality *per se*. Dominant discourses of rurality offer notions of aural rhythm – birds singing, the whoosh of wheat fields in the wind, the low grumble of a tractor – but these don't connect with the soundscapes of a car. Moreover, the discursive rural silences human presence; particularly in the form of the car. And, this has tangible resonance in the subjective taskscape of rural driving performances, since individuals didn't collectively bring these rhythms to the fore. The materiality of practice provided the

soundscape: thus that materiality, the car, is therefore embedded in rhythms of rurality *per se* in situated practices. So whether discursively absent or not, the rural is produced through the rhythms the car aurally provides. This reflection leaves the notion of foregrounding/backgrounding (Tacchi, 1998) of sounds as broadly foregrounding the various rhythms the car offers in situated, subjective enactments of rural driving.

Driving performances in rural space transpire as polyrhythmically negotiated. Taskscape that endure as rural driving practice cohere to suggest that visual and aural rhythms are appropriated in practice in subjective and situated contexts. However, as Wunderlich (2010: 51) notes, 'Henri Lefebvre (2004) and Tim Ingold (1993; 2000) suggest that the perception of temporality in everyday environments is privileged by the aural sense'. Yet the findings in this context somewhat push back against this theoretical privileging of the aural, since the visual manifestation of seasonal and weekly rhythms hold just as much importance in shaping practice. Through exploration of aural rhythms, however, an understanding of temporality in more embodied registers emerges. Whilst the aural may animate the taskscape of rural engagement, the performances come to be routed through rhythms not just of the individual driver-car-road, but an anticipation and negotiation of the temporalities of others.

5.5 Driving Rhythmic Discussion

Thinking about the drive in terms of rhythms opens up the inherent temporalities of the 'taskscape' as it is physically and imaginatively navigated in subjective performance. The chapter therefore has not been about recognising rhythms *per se*, but rather their affective capacities and practised dimensions, with the subsequent implications for productions of 'rural' space that ensue. Rhythm, then has been taken up following Edensor (2010b) as a form of 'time geography', and the embeddedness of rhythms within an Ingoldian notion of taskscape analogous to Jones' (2011) work on tidal rhythms in everyday life. Rhythm provides a framing to unpack the 'temporal texture' (Shove, 2011:218) that subjective performance of practices entails. Thus what emerges is that rhythms are how individuals can articulate the temporal dynamics of their performances, but, more notably, that rhythms are constitutive of practice; for example generating meaning for driving the same routes at different times of year.

Firstly, it is imperative to note how working with video, alongside more established methods' data, illustrated how the video opened up distinct spaces for analysis. By reflecting on the analytical approach to the video, through the context of the post-videoing interview data, my interpretation was holistically tempered. The video data provided a facet in the bricolage of data generated in the project that was able to fundamentally shift the way in which rhythm could have been interpreted. I think this is imperative to highlight, since the

polyrhythmic composition of the taskscape is experienced multi-dimensionally and inherently subjectively, both in terms of participant and researcher comprehension.

Thus thinking rhythmically within a practice theory framework offers the plurality necessary to conceive of practices as temporally myriad. It began with the ‘dimensionality’ that Schatzki (2001) refers to of practice, whereby time is conceived as more-than objective. For Schatzki (2010: 65), ‘interwoven timespaces form an infrastructure that runs through and is essential to social affairs’. Fundamentally, the notion of rhythm enables an unravelling of the architecture of those timespaces because it provides a conceptual framing that enables disentangling of the multifarious facets from which practised timespace is composed. For developing understandings of rural driving practices, this enmeshing of concepts provides fertile ground to comprehend how subjective driver-car-road engagements performatively negotiate temporalities. Thus, that “practices make time” (Shove, 2009: 217) emerges empirically, through the way people actively embed multiple rhythms into the competency and comprehension of meaning for rural driving practice.

In discussion of the empirical material, progression towards unravelling how rural space emerges in practice was made on multiple levels. The seasonal rhythms that were discussed illuminated how roads were key sites (linking back to the previous chapter), and that engaging with seasonal rhythms had geographical ramifications in terms of route choice. For some, routes emerge from nexuses of rhythms that came together in situated performances, such that the temporal rhythm of the seasons can be understood as performative in practice. The seasonal came to be articulated through largely ‘natural’ tropes whereas the discussion of weekly rhythms took more socially defined renderings of temporality as integral to practice. Through analysis it was shown how negotiating the same weekly rhythm has situated resonance in the taskscape. Weekly rhythms for Liam were performed differently from Robert, illustrating how the ‘dimensionality’ of practice has subjective variations, comprehensible through focusing on the rhythms being performed.

Yet this data offered little to destabilise dominant discursive renderings of rurality. For example, unpacking the weekly rhythmic scale provided some counter narrative, insofar as the rhythms being negotiated illustrate a more complex performativity of the rural. Participants’ performances of engagement decentred Sunday, by emphasising using rural spaces in other temporalities such as mid-week or Saturdays, but Sunday was a key temporality conceptually, whether the drive performance took place then or not. As the data also illustrates at this juncture, the temporalities of rural driving inevitably enmesh in situated practices.

But when the chapter turned to consider the aural rhythms echoing through situated taskscapes of the rural drive, the notion of temporality is opened up to the myriad of other rhythms that can embed in practice. Opting to play one’s own music means the beat bears

out upon the ears whilst the car moves along. And thinking even more broadly, playing of many types of audio media within the car, each has rhythmic affect: the book on tape paces through the prose, the home-made compilation on CD, MP3 player or tape offers self-chosen rhythms ordered or shuffled at will – each acoustic addition rhythmically permeating the drive performance. Besides melodic or literal sounds, those of the car engine were also given temporal deference in subjective taskscapes. The aural rhythms that augment the countryside drive are esoteric and perpetuate the practice as an inherently subjective engagement with the countryside, formed through a myriad of taskscapes. The import such analysis has for the thesis, however, is in teasing out the selectivity – the ‘foregrounding’/‘backgrounding’ (Tacchi, 1998) – that adheres to subjective performances of *rural* driving. By unpacking the dimensions of rhythm in the rural drive, the chapter has illuminated spaces and contexts where the discursive notions of rurality surface in performance. Rhythms become layered in and amongst others within practice.

Finally, what this chapter ultimately demonstrates is how in everyday mundane lives, rural space is seldom considered to be a static environment. Contra to popular discourses on the rural as fixed and typically seen as agricultural, these narratives suggest that people embrace change in the rural landscape, accommodate fluctuations that are embedded in its social dynamics and ultimately produce their own routes of engagements through attentiveness to the landscape’s animation. The timespaces that become embedded, and are made through subjective productions of rural space, encompass many temporal rhythms in individuals’ taskscapes. Furthermore, in illustrating the import of temporality in practice, this chapter also brings to the fore how there is a complex, dynamic presence of visuality in the recognition of rhythms in the taskscape. It is dynamism that provides the backdrop to the following chapter, as it takes up unravelling how visual primacy in engagements with rural space manifests.

• 6 •

RE/VIEW

6.1 Seeing Rural Space

*“The view of the long valley and the hills and all that you know.
That’s what it’s all about” (Ian).*

Rural driving owes a lot to performances of seeing. To see is imperative to driving, and like Ian’s expression of his experience captures, to see is to be able to produce the (rural) landscape as a view. Here he is talking about a famous viewpoint (explored later in this chapter). His insight captures how seeing is shaped by the conceptual understanding he has for what rural space should look like. By suggesting that the view, the *visible*, is the pivotal aspect in defining the encounter, Ian’s reflection also gestures at the *visual* dimension in engaging with rural space. But that is Ian’s view vis-à-vis the view: he makes *visible* in his view that which he *visualises* as integral to it. For others, the enmeshing of the visual in performance has various implications and dynamics in practice – as I shall go on to explore. But, it is this tension between seeing and what can be seen in practice that concerns this chapter. And moreover to do that, it is imperative to position the view, or visualising performances in rural driving, as inherently produced; following Bissell’s (2008: 57) contention that ‘visual practices are fluid and emergent’. This means that *visuality* is understood not as fixed and directional, but rather situated and contingent.

The need to attend to the visual (as I will argue through the chapter) emerges since the data are replete with notions of visibility, *visuality* and envisaging that shape how rural driving ensues. To get a handle on how to unpack situated and contingent *visuality*s, it is vital to pin down the terms of reference being suggested through the chapter, to enable clarity from the outset. Discussion pivots around three interconnected notions of *visible*, *visual* and *envisioning*. *Visible*, and *visibility*, is what can be (and is) seen in the subjective engagement with rural space. *Visual*, or *visualising*, is the dimension of sight and seeing, similarly subjectively defined. Notably, in order for the *visible* to be recognised, for something to be rendered *visible*, it must have emerged from the *visual*; since the *visual* is the broader sense of what is available to be seen. The third notion, *envision*, or *envisioning*, is what can be imagined as seen or see-able in practice. A broader term, *visuality*, is used as a catch-all notion for seeing, looking and *envisioning* within the performance of countryside driving.

So, the centrality of *seeing*, in the performance of *rural* driving, needs to first be contextualised. Driving is an inherently visual practice; whilst the production of rural can be understood as similarly rendered through visual registers. Engaging with the field of vision whilst driving enables seeing space as rural *per se*. Moreover, when producing rural space *per se*, this renders seeing as always already thinking in terms of the visibility of the countryside. The omnipresence of rural discourse, how it is ‘inescapable’ (Cloke, 2003*b*) in everyday social and cultural lives, arguably is manifest in visible registers through its embeddedness in our latent attitudes towards what we see as being rural space *per se*.

But what I do not do in this chapter is fall back on concepts of ‘gaze’ as a conceptual framing, in any of its various renderings – such as touristic (Urry, 1995), or of the rural (Abram, 2003). It is however important to give deference to such thinking here, if only to draw my distinction, since Cosgrove and Daniels’ (1988) iconography of landscape approach underpinned a decade of research on landscape. Yet for this theoretical framework, thinking iconographically about landscape, deconstructing how landscape veils a reality, too readily separates representation, what is seen and visible, from the subjective, situated seeing and visualising that inherently is producing landscape in practice. Such positioning of seeing performances would only serve to reify rural space as anachronistic. To conceive of the visibility as a negotiation of gaze negates the value in conceptualising through the body; since the embodiment of landscape production is denied. Instead, Merleau-Ponty (1958) reminds of the critical purchase to be leveraged through conceiving all perception, including the visual, as borne out of embodied registers that always situate sight from *somebody*. And, through Ingold’s (1993; 2001) taskscape, that landscape is not to be deconstructed anterior from the body, rather is produced through and in the moment of the body’s engagement with the world.

Taking the body as the key site from which enacting and interacting to produce the taskscape (Ingold, 1993;2001) requires cementing the import of the visual as integral to the perceptive, sensual body. This is a perspective that is particularly resonant in landscape phenomenological theory. A return to a quote noted in the conceptual framework reminds what is at stake for conceptualising the performance of rurality through the car:

‘If landscape refers to the materialities and sensibilities with which we see then its narration needs to be attentive to ways in which these are emergent from and indeed constitute ongoing, refracting visual cultures. It needs also to foreground the always already performative and eventful nature of such sensibilities’ (Wylie, 2006: 533).

Wylie reminds that it is the theorisation that the individual, when producing their spatial engagement, negotiates their positionality relationally and in the context of the visualities that encircle any given space. Therefore the production of rural space can be conceived as always occurring against a backdrop of rural ‘visual cultures’ (*ibid.*).

Consequently, I focus in this chapter on the ways in which seeing, looking and imagining enfold into the performance of driving in rural space. The specific terms of reference – visible, visual and envision – serve as the sections of discussion adopted below to build the argument. Chapter sections attend to each of these terms, but initially it is useful to outline their purpose and application in order to frame the whole of the chapter's trajectory. The first term I disentangle is that of the 'visible'. Drawing on Merleau-Ponty (1958) specifically, this term of reference is used to explore what is perceived as seen whilst rural driving. It refers to the very presence of materials, bodies and ephemera in ocular view at any given moment in the rural drive which are brought to the fore in subjective practice. It is the visible realm that shapes how rural driving practice unfolds in optical registers. There is a tangibility and lived reality to the visible that can be understood as shared amongst individuals' taskscape, as I shall go on to explore. Whereas, the second term, 'visual', is employed to capture the immaterial and conceptual dimensions of what is seen when *looked* for in the driving engagement with rural space. 'Visual', or visualising, is broadly concerned with the conceptual rendering of sight in subjective scales. It builds on the 'visible' by offering a means for recognising that what is seen in practice is selected and situated through the perception of the subject. An important point of clarity is essential in defining these first two themes is their interdependency: the visible is only made within the conceptual rendering the visual performs. The third, 'envision', or 'envisioning', refers to the temporal shaping of what is seen, or not, in the visibility of rural driving. It leans on Wylie's (2006) notion of 'seen and seer' and Ingold's (1993;2001) notion of taskscape as inherently temporal (see previous chapter). Envisioning emphasises the imaginative dimension that shapes what is seen in practice.

Before attending to the data, I explore the theoretical underpinning for these dimensions of visibility in the rural drive. Following that the discussion takes up empirical analyses broadly framed within the three notions of seeing initially outlined here. Through this analysis the interconnectivity of performances that engage with the visible, visual and envision are blurred. Whilst these categories serve as the way in which the data are presented, I am acutely aware that such categorisation falsely separates out data that are inherently interconnected. That is why, in the penultimate section of the chapter, I draw together data to transcend these labels.

6.2 Embodied Perspectives on Visuality

To position vision as more complex than merely what is seen; that is, to pay attention to what is conceptual and anticipated, necessitates initially returning to the conceptual framework's key theorists, Schatzki and Ingold. In Schatzkian theories of practice (Schatzki, 1996; 2001; 2002), the visual is largely taken-for-granted as embedded in practice.

Schatzkian ontology doesn't privilege the visual, focusing instead on the 'doings and sayings' of practice as entailing embodied actions, within which the visual is incorporated. For Ingold, the visual is inherently part of the taskscape. Visuality doesn't exist alone in his work, rather his concern is to emphasise that landscapes are not solely visual entities (Wylie, 2007). Since Ingold offers little space for consideration of the visible, visual or envisaged, little theoretical purchase is found for making visuality explicit through the notion of taskscape nor practice. Yet, in this empirical context, the rural, is inherently negotiated through visual registers (see, Abram, 2003) and, for mobilities visuality is 'axiomatic' (Bissell, 2009) to practice. Turning to the phenomenological basis of the thesis' conceptual framework, however, opens up the potential for harnessing key concepts to work with. Thus in this discussion, I develop a conceptual framing for the analysis of the data that initially stems from a return to Merleau-Ponty.

Thinking through phenomenology is useful in terms of configuring how we can theorise the acts of seeing, looking and envisioning as mutually constituted in situated performances of rural landscape production. It is through Merleau-Ponty (1958) that we are reminded of the embeddedness of visuality in the embodied experience of the world, where the vision of space is understood as perception routed through the body:

'The thing is inseparable from a person perceiving it, and can never be actually *in itself* because its articulations are those of our very existence, and because it stands at the other end of our gaze or at the terminus of a sensory exploration which invests it with humanity. To this extent, every perception is a communication or a communion' [original emphasis] (Merleau-Ponty, 1958: 373).

In emplacing visuality as a distinct modality of the corporeal realm, the performative subject is negotiating their perception of the world through vision produced in relation to it. Merleau-Ponty sets out how visuality is collaboratively routed through sight, bodily sensation and space. Thus, to comprehend 'rural' space as seen, is to couple vision as an engaged modality amongst the production of rural space *per se*. Wylie offers a succinct summary that emphasises why it matters for visuality to be understood as embodied:

'Human being, as being-embodied, is forever anchored within the visible world, through that embodiment. The embodied vision of the individual subject is thus precisely a particular point of view within the world – not a gaze from without' (Wylie, 2007: 150).

It is this seeing *with* the world that positions seeing and what is visible as always already relational, both notionally, and as I contend through this chapter, in practice. To see necessitates negotiating the subjective relationality to what can be seen. Notably, 'vision is intentional in structure because it is never empty' (Sobchack, 1992: 85). Thus visibility, and what is recognised as visible *per se*, should be positioned as inherently situated. To unpack

the findings on visibility therefore, needs to attend to the ways in which those visibilities are subjectively produced.

Moreover, Sobchack (1992) provides an analogous position and set of concepts on the visual. In her seminal work on the phenomenology of film perception, Sobchack unpacks how vision is existentially experienced through the body, adopting theoretical grounding from Merleau-Ponty. In her work she proposes two forms of vision – the ‘operative’ and the ‘volitional’ – that I use later in the chapter in discussion of the visibilities of driving. However, it’s useful to note at the outset her key point on the way vision, however categorised, transcends such discrete labels, owing to the inherent subjectivity the bodily rendering of visibility engenders:

‘It is the flesh through which vision is accomplished in both of its forms and directional trajectories. This flesh is of the world as well as in it, sharing in the world’s materiality and thickness. It is a flesh that occupies space and is occupied by it as time – a flesh that is finite and thus experiences finitude, that is durable and thus experiences duration, that is malleable and thus experiences form and change and motion. This is *vision embodied* – a material activity that not only sees but can be seen, that makes vision itself visible’ [original emphasis] (Sobchack, 1992: 93).

Sobchack captures the embeddedness of vision, and of what is conceived as visible, as relationally produced in subjective and situated encounters with the world. The corporeal renders vision and, in turn, emplaces it within a framing of temporality. Thus the visible, the visual and envisioned can begin to be understood not as discrete processes, rather relationally negotiated moments within the subjective production of space through the body. As the chapter unfolds, the work of Sobchack re-emerges in developing theoretical contributions from the empirical material explored.

In an extension of phenomenological approach – a ‘post-phenomenological’ viewpoint – Wylie (2006) offers further purchase to bring visibility to the fore. For Wylie, the temporality of the landscape is bound up with its visual engagement. He advocates adopting an analytical approach that is attentive to landscape as it is subjectively and relationally produced owing, at least in part, to embodied visual registers. When he notes, ‘landscape hinges between, and needs to be written through, both the furnishing of the visual and its arrangement into patterns of seer and seen’ (Wylie, 2006: 532), he highlights how visibility is embellished subjectively through the situated relationality producing it. Thus the thesis must attend to how individuals compose their landscapes through the taskscape, by being attentive to the registers that visibility evokes, and fundamentally how they convey them. It is by unpacking visibility, shaped by both ‘seer and seen’, that Wylie reminds of the inherent temporality of the taskscape in visual registers. The analysis attempts to disentangle three key ways – the visible, the visual and the envisaged – that visibility performatively manifests, by teasing apart how individuals negotiate shifting relationality of ‘seer and seen’

in producing their landscapes.

Finally, it is useful to acknowledge how theorising vision in a mobilities context has transpired, in order to draw distinction from the discussion that ensues in this chapter. Bissell (2008) offers a review of the progression of geography and visuality, before presenting three empirically-informed notions for understanding visuality in train mobilities: ‘sublime vision’ where the train is a vehicle for a ‘cinematic’ visual experience; ‘attentive vision’ whereby visuality is consciously performed; and ‘mediation’ which focuses on the materiality of the carriage and how that shapes what is seen. These serve as useful conceptual notions to understand the multiplicity of how visuality in motion can be understood. But Bissell is more concerned with how *vision* manifests and its affects, as opposed to the way in which the embodied scale frames vision with an enduring temporality. Vision, in Bissell’s conceptual framing, is embodied in experience insofar as ‘visual practices implicate other sensory modalities’ (Bissell, 2008: 44). I find this problematic against an understanding of the experience of space through the taskscape, routed through the body. Thus the chapter adopts a broader framing of visuality than has thus far been discussed in recent mobilities literatures, using Bissell as an empirical counterpoint in some analyses, where tangible, but maintaining that visuality can extend beyond this work; to be understood more holistically by paying attention to the conceptual and temporal dimensions of visibility, visualising and envisioning respectively.

So it is through drawing on such theorists that I attempt to push back against the narratives of practice and taskscape as obscuring the role of visuality, by establishing through the data how visuality is inherently integral to embodied landscape performances in practice. Through the chapter I analyse the ways in which visuality is subjectively negotiated in producing the rural engagement. Thus this chapter is in several parts. In the first part I consider the fundamental visibilities that shape the performance of driving in rural space – that which individuals consider visible *per se*, and therefore integral to the practice of their driving. It is important to first explore these as a way to situate the subsequent discussions that follow, where I turn to considering the visual and the envisioned. Discussion of the visual unpacks how conceptual notions of rurality shape visuality of subjective performances. Moreover, in exploring *envisioning*, the notion of absence in the visible/visual realm is introduced, to illustrate how data present subjective taskscapes of practice shaped by shifting temporalities. By separating out the discussion into distinct analyses of the visible, visual and envisioned the chapter unpacks the various registers through which seeing shapes driving performances in and of rural space. However, this is an exercise in exploration of the data, rather than a distinguishable and definitive separation, since in situated performance these processes of seeing, looking and imagining are enmeshed in complex productions of the subjective taskscape. Thus, it is the entanglement of the three,

the visibility of practice, to productions of rural space *per se* that lead to the penultimate discussion the chapter presents. It is here where I use the example of multiple taskscapes together to explore how reification of ‘rural’ plays out in the production of rural space. In what follows, the data on Surprise View are explored, with the discussion highlighting how the notions of visibility, visuality and envisioning enmesh in practice. Furthermore, it illustrates how processes of landscape production, driving performance, topography, road geography and discourse are relationally negotiated in situated engagements that can be theoretically conceived as producing rural space. The final section of the chapter concludes the analytical discussion, whilst offering reflections on the contribution made to the progression of the thesis overall.

6.3 Visible, Visual, Envision: Untangling what is Seen

Performing driving is intrinsically about seeing what is visible in the road. To take seeing as unproblematically negotiated within the production of rural landscape negates the complex way in which the visible is brought to the fore in situated performances. In what follows, the data illuminate visible registers *seen* whilst rural driving. Yet critical discussion of each dimension of visible, visual and envisioning, begins to illustrate how the ocular is fundamentally embedded in the embodied practising of driving. These can be divided into two facets around how the car shapes engagement with rural space; namely, practice of driving and the material mediation the car creates. In this discussion I focus solely on the ocular, to initially draw out how what is *visible* is shaped by the various material and social contexts composing the performance of rural driving. I begin with this section in order to set out the foundational tenet of practice as imperatively about the visible *per se*. I then begin to unravel the notion of visual to explore how visualising and visualisations shape practices, progressing to disentangle the visible and the visual in discussion of producing rural. In the last section I attend to the temporal to embellish further the ways in which visuality is shaped, in analyses that explore the data on envisioning.

6.3.1 Inherent Visibilities of Driving

Driving demands engagement with what is visible as the movement of the car unfolds along the road corridor being navigated. The road itself offers much dynamism both longitudinally and laterally (see earlier ‘Road’ chapter) that is recognised in visual registers. But the car occupies the driving body too, since it provides dials and digits to read to monitor its performance. Thus the first context to discuss visibility is the inherent forms of visibility embedded in driving the car itself.

In order to drive legally in the UK, individuals must pass standardised theory and practical tests. At both of these junctures, the ability to see and read the road in terms of

signage, reactions, road layout and markings, for example, are tested. The performance of seeing the road as a *driver* is developed during the process of learning to drive. Becoming a driver, thinking in a Foucauldian sense (Foucault, 1975), disciplines the driver-body to the car-road space it occupies, through legal statutes that constrain it to perform as a docile *driver* body. If we think of this process through the lens of practice theory, becoming a driver involves skill, developing ‘learned competency’ (Shove and Panzar, 2005) in the form of driving and negotiating the material complexities of the driver-car-road relation. The seeing by the driver is shaped by the way in which driving is socially and culturally manifest too (see, Edensor, 2007). Hence, the visibilities of driving as an engagement with rural space, should in the first instance, be framed through the way driving disciplines the visible realm to the driver.

Equally, the various visibilities that the car’s materiality engenders are integral to learning how to become an effective driver. Visibilities that the driver must learn to engage with in order to successfully pilot a vehicle are numerous: the windscreen frames the road; side windows provide blinkered lateral perspectives; mirrors reflect the side and rear views. That “[the van]’s a lot harder to backup because you can’t see through the back doors and the windows as easily so it’s not as manoeuvrable as a car” (Shaun) is indicative of the import the car has in framing the visibilities it enables. For Shaun, sight is the problematic aspect when using his van as there isn’t the visibility, to *see*, that he is familiar with when using a car. Similarly, Rita had to learn how to manoeuvre the car in reverse by learning how she needs her body to *see* the road surrounds:

“when I backed he was saying things like you see that tree there and I had to get that in my sights before I turned the corner and then I could do an absolutely perfect turn” (Rita).

Becoming a competent driving body necessitates learning the visibilities for how to normatively perform using a car. Moreover, interacting with the car is spatially contingent too. When Ian glances in his off-side wing mirror he’s checking the side of the car and its positioning as he traverses a sharp bend (see, *Figure 6.1*). Interplay between the car as a materiality and the performance of driving exists, whereby using the car necessitates a performance that inherently makes visibilities in practice. Looking in the mirror, reading the engine revolution counter or checking through the side windows are performances that are based upon engaging with what is visibly tangible. That competence at driving is learning to visibly see with the car, links with Wylie’s notion of visuality being constructed through a ‘view within the world – not a gaze from without’ (Wylie, 2007: 150). To conceive of what is seen therefore should be to always frame that visibility within the relationality of the driver-car-road.



Figure 6.1: *Reading offside wing-mirror whilst driving*



Figure 6.2: *Ed's Video Screenshot*

Just as the car shapes how the driver must see to drive it, the visibility its materiality affords mediates the visible field for producing rural space too. Since the car intervenes in how a driver (or an occupant) can visibly engage with space as they're moving through it, it

forms an integral framing to the visibility of producing rural space *per se*. To position the car as an intervention is to reify the rural as produced through non-automotive registers. Moreover, the car's specificity in (co)constituting performances of rural production mean that it is imperative to disentangle how, as a materiality in view, it shapes what is made visible in subjective practice. What the figures below collectively depict is how separating the car's mediation of the road space from the production of rural space it engenders is futile, as the two are intimately entwined in the driver-car-road production.

As Figure 6.2 depicts, what is visible from the car is, on occasion, the car. As the car traverses the countryside it shapes the way the driver and/or any occupants produce their landscape engagement. The polished bonnet acts as a mirror displaying the surrounding foliage. As Figure 6.3 shows, when the windscreen is covered in rain, the car blurs the visibility and thus becomes visible in its mediation of the engagement with the landscape. The windscreen itself, though transparent, renders the visibility: sometimes tinting, sometimes refracting, sometimes exacerbating the glare of what is visible in the road space; becoming opaque in the fractions of time between the windscreen wipers' movement.



Figure 6.3: *Mike's Video Screenshot*

It is a sense of the car that Andrea recognises:

"When you're driving you're fairly low, you're driving at below normal walking head-height and that is how you normally see things, when you're being a passenger particularly. But when you're either in the discovery which is considerably higher, or in the camper which is sort of a higher up cab, you're looking from above head height so you're getting a totally

different [view] [...]when you're higher up you're looking over the hedges and you're getting that bigger picture" (Andrea).

So for Andrea, the material affordances of the car windscreen and windows qualitatively shape the visibility of the rural space she produces. She thinks through her body about the visibility of the car framing the 'picture'. Moreover, as figure four shows, the door panels, dash, window and windscreen framings interrupt the perspective on the landscape. The car mirror reflects the extent of the vehicle and display to the driver the state of the road behind them. Integral to the visibility of the rural in these figures is the car, but notionally these cars should not be conceived as problematic to engaging with rurality, as to do so would serve to reify how the rural landscape is conceptualised.

Finally, the car should be recognised as having a material presence within the landscape production of its occupants insofar as it provides an inside space from which to produce the rural as external. It visibly detaches the seeing of rural space from the body by providing a barrier that encases the body to the internal space of the car and not any rural externality, the seeing body visibly engages with. Thus, this internal/external position must be sensitively navigated in theoretical approach. It is not a detachment, however, since the car is integral to the landscape production of its occupants (see, Figure 6.4). But, in recognising that the car's materiality shapes the way that the countryside is visible, rural space is conceptually positioned as reified. If it is problematic that the car intervenes in the landscape then the inference is that the rural is to be produced with cars absent from



Figure 6.4: *Intervening Car (Photograph Author's Own)*

individuals' taskscapes. Such reflection needs recognition throughout the subsequent analysis of visibility because it reminds that visibility is, despite the tangibility and physicality of it capturing what can be seen, inherently relational too.

6.3.2 Visualising the Rural Drive: Selective Seeing

The visual, or to visualise, denotes the conceptual mediation of seeing in the performance of rural driving. The visual is distinct from the visible insofar as what is tangibly visual is shaped both by what is seen (or not) and by subjectivities that inform how it is seen. Visualising in the rural drive produces rural space *per se* akin to the visible too: whereas visibility refers to what is materially made visible in the engagement with space, visual produces rurality through a conceptual selectivity for what is seen as (rural) space. Thus the key distinction is that the visual is inherently the subjective realm through which the visible is rendered.

It is useful to briefly note the methodological approach adopted to encourage participants to unpack their visualising practices. For example, to explore visualising-in-practice, participants were asked to recall to what extent the architecture of the road featured as part of their visual experience of engaging with the rural. The aim wasn't to gain a conclusive truth on whether the road and/or car were visually pertinent in experiences of rural driving, but rather to open up space to unpack how subjective taskscapes produced rural space in visual registers beyond that which is inevitably visible in a rural drive.

What transpired was how there was an inherent selectivity in what is seen. In the data that are discussed below, the driver-car-road relationality emerged as inherently subjective in the way that visual practices shape situated performances of seeing in the taskscape of rural space. For example while viewing her video data, Beth admitted that she actively looks beyond the road when driving, seeking out the views that she wants to engage with. Using the video data as a prompt, I asked her, *does it look like this in your memory?* To which she responded:

"No. It's obviously less on the track and more out. So I don't look at the track! I don't look where I'm going! So it's really up to the clough, 'cause where we live there's a house there and I'll look up and think we're very hidden away there. Or I'll look out into the field because our neighbour grazes his belted Galloway over that way. Or he'll have cut his thistles, or I'll see whether he has cut his thistles. Do you know what I mean. Because I'm a land manager I look at it, how it's been, what's happening on the actual land" (Beth).

Beth has the opportunity to look at the landscape surrounding where she drives by filtering out the track from her view. She is visualising the rural space she is producing in practice; what is visible to her is guided by where her interest is situated. By choosing to focus her perspective on what she's interested in while she's driving along the track she can

concentrate on the ‘actual land’. For Beth, the track is not considered part of that rural taskscape she is producing: her visualising encompasses expansive the road surrounds because she wants to visually engage with them in practice. Thus, her seeing is not the aforementioned ‘functional’ visibilities (Sobchack, 1992) the car and driving demand, but where her interests in the landscape are. She occupies her own perspective and actively manages what she sees in her taskscape.

In a similar vein Mike acknowledges that the rurality he produces omits some aspects of the visible for his own, in his case, enjoyment. This is a key example of the power the video data had in eliciting more in-depth reflections from participants. When showing Mike some of the video he had made, he exclaimed in response to the roads he was seeing, that when he visualises the rural drive, there are “*no double yellow lines in my visions. I must blur the edges to suit myself*” (Mike). That he concedes the visualisation he participates in is inherently selective echoes Beth’s performance above. But by further unpacking his enduring viscosity of rural driving performance, the visible again emerges as blurred by a conceptual rendering of what the practice affords, leaving the seeing that animates Mike’s taskscape as inherently visual:

“I tell you what it’s like when I remember it in my head, it’s a still picture [...] even though I’m inside the car looking out of it and I can see all the dashboard [...] [my memory would] be more like me flying down road, do you see what I mean, with no car around me, see what I mean? [...] I’ve never thought about it like that but it’s [the car’s] not in my scenes in my head, not at all” (Mike).

Here the driver-car-road relationality is negotiated as contingent upon the space being navigated. As Mike drives through rural space he omits the visible traces of the car, preferring instead to focus on the view. In suggesting that he selectively appropriates part of the visible field and omits others, for him, rural landscape is produced without the car. He is blinkered to the dashboard and the yellow lines, and very much aware of it, because he conceptually doesn’t want to include these within his production of rural space. Thus what occupies the visual dimension of his taskscape, he admits, is a selective seeing of the practice. By recognising that there is some selectivity in the way in which he enacts his rural engagement, this particular instance demonstrates how people are aware that they anticipate a rural drive aesthetic, and incorporate this into practice. Where this leaves the notion of rurality is a question I return to in the conclusion to the chapter.

For Sobchack (1992: 93) moreover, these examples of seeing are ‘volitional’; that is ‘the visual taking up of the visible deliberately as an act of judgement, of conscious and intentional choice’. It is the intentionality to be selective in engagement with what is visible that characterises some facets of rural driving performance as inherently visual.

Furthermore, to connect back to the conceptual framework of this chapter, Beth and Mike

see (and thus produce) their rural engagement akin to Wylie's (2006) concept, through their situated sensibilities.

6.3.3 Paradox of the Visible and Visual in Rurality

Seeing space as ostensibly rural necessitates making visible in the taskscape that which engenders the subjective production of rural space. That making visible relies on a sense of what is to be seen as rural; thus a conceptual framing of what rural space visibly entails. Whilst, in a way this may appear obvious – rural spaces intrinsically *are* composed of fields, open, green spaces and low population densities – the bucolic landscapes that popularise the discursive notions of rurality shape the visible perception of the countryside landscape as rural *per se* too. But reflecting on the manifest performances of visibility, in the context of producing rurality, illuminates key values about how the rural is visibly produced through the car: with the car as both an agent of mobility and a visible presence in itself. Cars co-produce the visibilities of rural space in motion from the conceptual rendering of what is available in the visual realm to be made visible in practice. It is the interplay between these two concepts that occupies the ensuing discussion here, to illustrate how visibility in rurality is inherently visual.

That the car enables visibility on new (rural) spaces, may at first, in some ways, seem a given. Yet as Andrea suggests, although the landscape may be similar, or familiar, until one has been there, and by extension *seen* the 'something new' then the experience is valued:

"very often when you're doing this you're driving through somewhere where you've never actually been before so you are seeing something new. Not necessarily spectacularly different. [...] But you know driving in the car is actually getting you to the different sights" (Andrea).

Andrea suggests that seeing in relation to her production of rurality is about difference in the familiar. She uses the notion of 'sight' to suggest that moments of her rural taskscape are experienced specifically through the visible. Similarly, Ed notes how, for him, the performance is about seeing to engage with 'more' and 'discover', setting up visibly engaging with rural space as a key dimension to practice:

"we've got some beautiful countryside around near us and it's just great to find, there's always somewhere new to find and I do enjoy that when opportunities present themselves to go up a road that I don't know. To discover more of the countryside and to enjoy it and really just to enjoy the view while keeping a bit of an eye on the road of course you know!" (Ed).

For Ed, to *see* from the car is to locate that encounter, to 'find' the 'new' rural space. Producing *rural* space, is bound up with visibly conceiving space as rural *per se* from, at least in part, the view the car enables. Ed gestures at seeing as key, through reference to the

‘view’ and to the ocular demands driving places on his seeing body. The data captures the tension between the recreational visibilities coupled with producing rural space – ‘to enjoy the view’ – and the performance of driving as being inherently about negotiating the ‘driver-car-road’ through the visible. Ed’s experience intimates how there are two competing visible dimensions relationally negotiated: the way the car shapes the visible field, whilst disciplining the driver to perform through what is visible to them in the driver-car-road relationality. The participants here discuss their wonderment in having the ability through their car to access and engage with a ‘new’ landscape to them. Moreover the notion of ‘new’ is particularly noteworthy from these participants, for whom rural driving performances are regular occurrences. This frequency of rural driving leaves them familiar with their rural locales, yet they still reference the acquisition of new visibilities as an important part of their rural driving performances.

The parallel between these two quotes is the value attributed to the new and unfrequented rurality, that the car is conceived as integral to achieving. One way to conceive of this tension, between seeing space in the taskscape and always producing it from an embodied positionality of seeing, is offered through Urry’s (1993) seminal work on tourist spaces as ‘sights’ or ‘sites’. Though a falsely dichotomising notion, to transcend this dualism, and position each situated taskscape as simultaneously negotiating space in visible registers as both a ‘sight’ to gaze upon, but always from a ‘site’ which one occupies, holds theoretical purchase; if only insofar as it illustrates the importance of the embodied rendering of what is made visible through the visual. The notion serves to highlight how visibility is always from somewhere, to echo Wylie’s (2007) explanation of the phenomenological noted above. The car at this level is about accessing the countryside to engage with it and by extension this positions the countryside as an object to be gazed at, objectifying the relationship with the landscape.

Yet, although the car enables the locating of new landscapes for rural space production, the car emerges as in tension with the production of rural space *per se*. The car as visibly present within the landscape was a key concern for many participants, and I would suggest this is a direct consequence of the way in which rurality is discursively understood. Through the dominant framing of rurality as idyllic, the car comes to be understood as alien, such that it unsettles the situated production of (idyllic) rural landscapes. Visibility of the material car has two interconnected dimensions. The first of these can be understood as one of scale that manifests in how the car is *seen* in subjectively produced rural spaces:

“when you see three hundred cars in a single place or I mean I suppose if you see one car it’s alright, it’s a mass of cars that bothers me. ... and visually it’s ugly too. ... turn into Burbage popular end into a car park and that spoils the look of the countryside” (Mark).

Thus Mark illustrates how the sight of other cars, in his performance of rural engagement, is problematic for him because cars are disjunctive with his perceived 'look' of the countryside. He illustrates a picture of cars collected together as a visibility on rural space that juxtaposes his perception of how it should look. Similarly, Rita shared the sentiment when she acknowledged that, although she doesn't understand why it is a problem for her, she loathes visibly seeing multiple cars in rural space: "*why did I dislike seeing them. I don't know. It's en masse, when there's a lot of them*" (Rita). For Rita and Mark, the number of cars is problematic as they conceive of them as static in (subjectively produced) rural space. For these participants, the visibility issue is acutely seeing a 'mass' of cars as degenerating the rural aesthetic 'look'. It is an issue of scale, moreover, whereby the presence of other vehicles places others in the taskscape of rural space, against a discursive rendering of rurality that emphasises the sanctity and isolation the 'rural' offers (see, Cloke, 2003). Although their experience of seeing other cars inevitably extends beyond the car park in the landscape, this data brings to the fore how visible spaces where the car coagulates are to some individuals. This visibility of the car in these 'en masse' contexts serves to highlight how the car is negotiated as a visible externality to performing rural space.

The second dimension produces the visibility of performing rural space as negotiating temporality. Visibly seeing materialities of modernity were conceived as juxtaposing the sight subjectively producing rural space *per se*. Thus seeing the car in rurality was problematic in more nuanced engagement with their materiality than reflecting on their (collective) presence like above:

"I hate seeing them. You know when you get these ones and they've got like a little market square and there's all cars parked round edges I hate to see it. It's that sorta modern invasion [...] They take away the escapism don't they because they remind you of where you are and the sort of time that you're living in" (Mike).

For Mike, the issue is again about volume and concentration of cars in rural space, but specifically insofar as cars symbolise a temporality that he doesn't associate with rural spaces – a sense of modernity is problematic to *see*. Mike reminds how cars are acute barometers of the time period, since their materiality has technologically and aesthetically developed over the past century. So for Mike, cars visibly are out of place as discursive notions of the rural space he produces want it to be visibly timeless, static and essentially nostalgic. Thus the car juxtaposes the 'little market square', for Mike, because its visibility in the production of rural space evokes connecting his taskscape to temporalities he wants to omit. Moreover, the visibility of other materialities in the spaces of rurality problematise its production. Cars, for Colin, are analogous to other architectures of modernity: "*you'd rather not see [cars] in the countryside just as you would prefer not to see pylons marching across the countryside and things like that you know, man-made objects*" (Colin). Similar to Mike,

Colin highlights how he doesn't like to *see* cars as they're not natural features he conceives of the landscape, akin to 'pylons'. In setting up cars and pylons as man-made, and thus visibly disjunctive in his production of rural space, Colin reminds again of the power of discursive rurality to shaping performances. The perception in the taskscape of cars (or pylons) being out of place illustrates how to see in the taskscape of rural engagement is inherently routed through dominant notions of rurality. The car as visible in the landscape emerges equally because it is a marker of modernity, a 'man-made object' in this space that is objectified as natural.

Problematising the visibility of aesthetics disjunctive with the dominant discursive notion of rural space is a key finding. This suggests that even in the most banal forms of seeing rural space, individuals subjectively render visibility through their sensibilities of what rurality means to them. Arguably this can be understood as an empirical illustration of seeing *with* the sensibilities – to paraphrase Wylie (2006) – that individuals are culturally subject to in mainstream British culture from birth (Cloke, 2003*b*). Thus, there is a paradox of visibility at play, since the car is both aesthetically rejected yet inherently integral to each visibility the driver-car-road negotiates in practice.

In this section I've explored the key visibilities that emerge within individuals' performances of producing rural space. I have focused here, admittedly in a one-dimensional way on the ocular, on how the visible is negotiated in the driver-car-road relationality. Yet the discussion has developed from noting the inherent visible demands of the driver-body, the material rendering of what is visible through the car, through to the way in which the visible is perceived in practice. Particularly in discussion of the latter, the visible is difficult to unravel in distinction from the visual. Hence, in the discussion that follows, I take up this blurring of what is visible, to explore the third key theme, envisioning.

6.3.4 Envisioning in the Rural

Temporalities compose the taskscape (Ingold, 1993; 2001) and in visible and visual registers bring to the fore visualities that are tangibly not visible, nor visual, in that moment of engagement: they are envisioned. By returning to the import of temporality in the taskscape (see also previous chapter), I want to remind that producing engagements with space is bound up with negotiating other dimensions of time. Envisioning is the production of the taskscape with the visibilities and visualities of disconnected timespaces. What has been seen before, or is anticipated from experience in (dis/re)connected 'timespaces', owing to the 'dimensionality' of practice (Schatzki, 2001), has conceptual purchase in subjective taskscapes of rural engagement. Thus, the data illustrate that what is ostensibly not seen matters in how the visual field is produced.

How past encounters and episodes have unfolded within the lifetimes of the

participants as drivers come to have a bearing on their performances now, articulated through how they *see* in their driver-car-road performance. The data contains multiple references to the ways that experiences, which are both spatially and temporally disconnected from the driving taking place then and there, are relationally negotiated in performance. But in this discussion I draw out three key examples from the data of how these experiences have visual dimensions; building on the discussion above for the complexity of the visible and visual in practice. The first of these is from discussion with Ian about the rendering of his visual field through his experience of seeing a deer appear:

Ian: I'm obviously watching out for problems that might be about to leap out and bite me, yeah? There aren't any deer out here but I once had a deer come straight out in front of me and I went straight into the side of it so one has to and that hasn't made me uneasy but I'm aware that that sort of thing can happen so you're always watching out for pheasants coming out of the hedge bottom.

R: so that sort of past experience is something that you're conscious of when you're driving now?

Ian: oh I think so yes, I don't think about that particular event but it made me aware that one has to be aware that there will be wildlife jumping out in front of you. So you just keep an eye out. You have an awareness turned on in your brain to try and avoid that from happening.

In this example Ian focuses on the potential for a presence, when in fact at the point of traversing any given road, there is most commonly no visible presence, of deer, pheasant or otherwise. Yet he orientates his performance to the potential visibility of another animate, albeit transitory, occupant of the road. It is this past experience that has shaped his apprehension, an experience not recollected when driving but learned from and accommodated; his practice adapted accordingly so that when driving he is constantly 'aware' that a presence in the road may occur. He adopts a competency in awareness that couples the cognitive – his understanding that wildlife may occupy the road – with an embodied commitment to 'keep an eye out'. He blurs the visible with the visual, by envisioning an absence in the road space. His driving body performs through the enfolding other temporalities into his taskscape that manifest in visual form in his practice. Wylie's (2006) emphasis on the import of 'seer' in the production of landscape resonates with how envision, and envisioning, here, highlights that (some) seeing animates the taskscape by recognising visible and visual absences in the moment, and that they shape enduring engagement with rural space.

An analogous example reminds of the import of the road as the space visible to the driver in performance. When Mike turned to his wife in the internal video footage and said, "I'll not go down there (*pointing at exit off the roundabout*), do you know what, that cyclist and that motorbiker who got killed", he brings to the fore the visualisation of that event in his performance of the road. Although not an event he directly witnessed, his imaginary of

the road space as the scene of accidents shapes how he sees the road, evoked by arriving at the junction. When I asked, “*so when you're thinking of where to go are you thinking of those instances*”, Mike’s response relied on the visible recognition of the road space

“not before I get there. I'll usually start heading in that direction and I'll get there and I'll see the choice of junctions and I'll do a, oh no, but I don't physically before I set off think oh I'll not go that way. It's only like when I approach something” (Mike).

Those absent instances, the instances that have occurred but in differing times and social contexts and exist only in memory and imagination, transcend into the present as the road presents itself on the horizon. Mike didn’t drive down this particular road with his wife and daughter in the car because he *saw* it as too dangerous. Through the visibility of the road, Mike begins to connect to other visualities of the road his automotion has taken him to, such that the experiential and imaginative visibilities and visualities of practice emerge. The driver-car-road relationality is shaped by the envisioning Mike carries out to conceive of the road. Moreover, the envisioning Mike enfolds into his driving performance in this moment illustrates a geographical contingency to how visibility shapes rural driving too. This envisioning in Mike’s taskscape can be better understood by turning to Sobchack:

‘One’s intentional projects are always inscribed in the selective combinations of vision – in the act of making visible, of choosing the limits of the seen and the situation of the seer. But this choice is never completed or completely discrete. What is seen and visible is infused with its partial invisibility and the alternative situations it presents as possible but not chosen by the seer. Similarly, what is not seen, what is invisible, is shaped and made present as much by its potential visibility as by its actual absence from the visual field. Thus, though absent from the visual field, the invisible is not excluded from that system of access to the world that is vision’ (Sobchack, 1992: 87).

Sobchack offers a means to conceive of the envisioned as absences in the present, whereby the moment the individual produces their taskscape of rural space, they can be theoretically understood as negotiating dynamic visualities. Just as Ian factors in the arrival of a pheasant, or Mike the visual of an accident, both instances equally ‘make present’ disconnected visible and visual dimensions in the visuality of practice. In Mike’s case, he illustrates how envisioning has performative affect too. Whereas for Ian – whose driver-body anticipates animals in the road – performative effect is embodied, for Mike route choice emerges as shaped by both experiences *in situ* and imaginaries gleaned from conversations in different times and places.

Sobchack’s notion of ‘absence’ as powerful in the visual field resonates in other data too. In this example the participant is reflecting on the time that she is driving along country lanes without the presence of hazardous conditions. Envisioning the rural road as occupied by snow and ice resonates as an absence ‘made present’ in the way the driver-car-road

relationality is seen by Beth:

“even now I get the odd, because we’ve had two difficult winters on the road, even now I think wow this road is clear, this is luxurious, an absolute joy. You know it was a real endurance for weeks and weeks [...] just because of the conditions that made it sort of fearful” (Beth).

From roads being experienced with the snow and ice, Beth’s perception of performing driving envisions the snow and ice, and although absent, they are very much present in her taskscape. She renders the road ‘clear’, ‘luxurious’ and a ‘joy’ since she enfolded into her understanding of performance the temporalities from when it was difficult to drive.

Following this response I asked Beth whether she was, *“looking at roads now with that experience in mind?”*. Her response is noteworthy since she replied, *“yeah, just little pangs. Not consciously, but thinking it’s nice and easy to drive”*. Her engagement with the rural road is *envisioned* through past temporalities that augment her experience of the practice. She doesn’t see visibly the ‘*conditions that made it sort of fearful*’ but she understands that absence through her bodily registers of performing driving.

In the analysis presented above, the notion of temporality is adopted to unravel the way that other visibilities and visualities come to be envisioned in the performance of rural driving. This enfolding of seeing in the visual field, or not, illustrates the situatedness and dynamism of the taskscape that is rural space. In articulating performances of rural driving these participants render relevant visible and visual entities that are not necessarily present in performance, but are ‘made present’ (Sobchack, 1992) through performance.

6.4 Surprise View

Surprise is the colloquial name for one of the bends on the A6187 road. It is so named as when travelling around this bend in a westerly direction there is a ‘Surprise Valley’, or ‘Surprise View’, presented momentarily to the occupants of the mobile car. The short time frame in which the view can be seen is a result of both the road layout and the dense foliage that lines the lower stretches of the road. Fleeting, there is a vantage point on the whole of the Hope Valley. Transient though it is, the vista appears so unexpectedly (on first experience) that Surprise is now a well-established idiom referring to this particular geographical point in the Peak District. The road it is glimpsed from is itself one of the main access routes into the Hope Valley, providing links from the more urban areas in the west of Sheffield and Chesterfield out to Hathersage, Hope, Edale, Castleton and beyond. The road is a winding and exposed stretch of tarmac that traverses across the moorlands of the northern part of the Peak District National Park to the western boundary of Sheffield city (see figure eight for area map). The location of Surprise (see Figure Seven) is a serendipitous intersection of road placement accommodating the area’s topography.

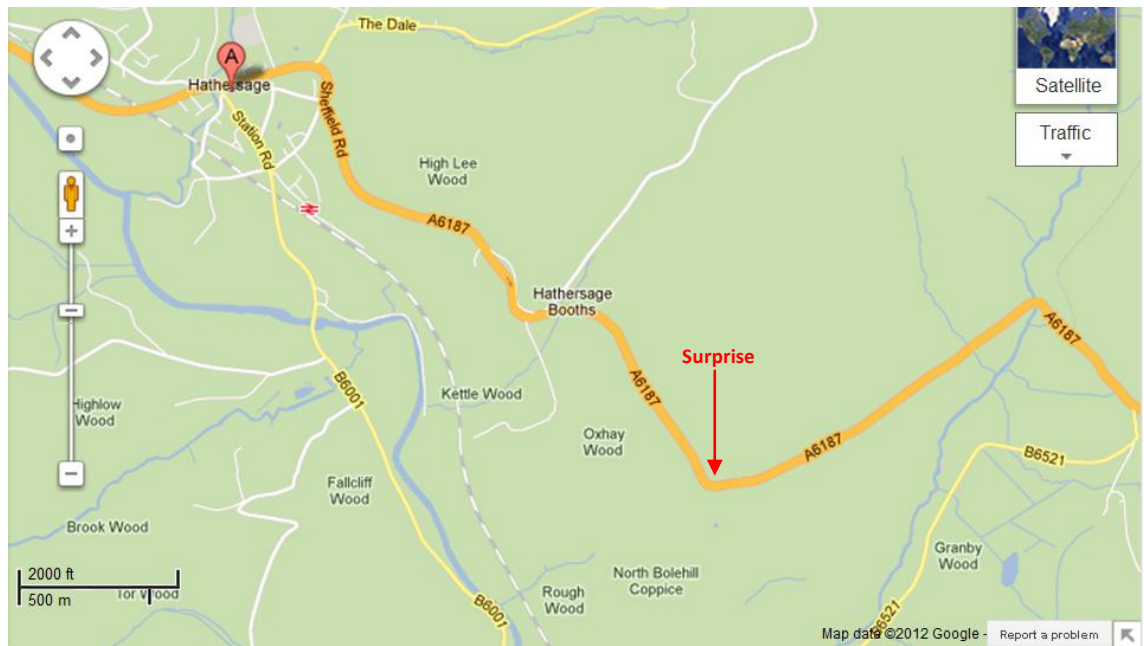


Figure 6.7: Google Map indicating location of Surprise © Google 2012 (Google, 2012)



Figure 6.8: Surprise View from a Car (Google, 2014b)

It is the topography of the Hope valley that provides much of the natural awe captured in this viewpoint. As can be seen in Figure 6.8, the view stretches for several miles to the west, and broadly encapsulates the whole of the Hope valley. As the road is a main artery through the Peak District, traffic flows and speed mean the viewpoint is difficult to engage with from a stationary position – neither stopping the car or walking there on foot would deliver the panorama that has now become idiosyncratic of the road. At this point, the road begins to descend, turning sharply to the north to cut a pathway horizontally across the valley side and thus avoid any steep inclines. The point of the turn in the road has been blasted out through the millstone grit rock, such that either side of the road on the hairpin are high rock boulders enclosing the road edge. The combination of road topography, directional change and road construction through the hillside means this geographical position offers the moving driver-car a unique engagement with the area. However, it is also imperative to emphasise here how this is a unique geographical space that comes together as a case study, I acknowledge, largely due to its exceptionality.

So, in the second half of this chapter, I concentrate discussion around this geographical area, since it emerged as an important focal point in discussions of rural driving practices. Through this case study, visibility, visualisation and envisioning can be understood to shape the way in which this ‘site/sight’ (see, Urry, 1995) in the Peak District is produced in practice. By taking Urry’s seminal ‘site/sight’ argument as a starting point, through recognising the inherent dualism at play, to explore how Surprise manifests simultaneously as both a ‘site’ from where rural space is produced and a ‘sight’ that engenders the sedimentation of it as rural space, in situated, contingent renderings of subjective taskscapes. Discussion of Surprise illustrates that, in practice, to separate the visibility, visualisation and envisioning is futile, since these dimensions of visibility coalesce across situated, dynamic taskscapes. Moreover, this section empirically sets out how Surprise as rural space comes into being. Thus, in this section of the chapter I will turn my attention to detailing the ways in which Surprise is subjectively but socially reproduced, giving particular attention to the ways in which the social relations that are invested in Surprise reproduce it as rural space.

6.4.1 Exploring Surprise

Surprise was discussed by both rural residents and non-rural residents, all of whom lived within a day’s driving distance of this road vantage point. I was new to this phenomenon, owing to the fact that my residential context has always been to the south of the Peak District National Park. Until I began this research I had not had the need to enter the Hope Valley from the east, from Sheffield, as I had always travelled to the area from south Derbyshire. I learned about this vantage point through the fieldwork; through talking to

participants and listening to them narrate their experience of the space. What emerged is how locally this space was constructed as integral to the way in which people attain value from the rural drive. Moreover, several video participants captured the surprise view in various states of weather and stages of the year, further emphasising the temporality that animates the rural drive through the nuances in conditions it endures (see Extracts 6.1 to 6.3 of participants' Surprise View external video camera data):



Extract 6.1: Bill's Surprise View

The conversation with Ian over the playback of his video data driving through Surprise view opened up how the space, for him at least, is produced in practice. The data presented below follows sequentially though the conversation as it transpired in the post-videoing interview. Whilst we were discussing his performance of Surprise, Extract 6.2 was amongst the data being shown on the laptop positioned in front of us. Ian's descriptive reflections are produced out of this set of stimuli, arguably, whereby both my questions, and the edited extract of his video data, are integral to the ensuing explanation he gave. Therefore the visual engagement he pursues to produce his landscape of Surprise needs unpacking within the context of its production:

"looking down there and I can recognise which hills are which and what I can see in the future, you can see the railway line going up here and we're just round this corner and there's the Pennines starting and there's all that sky" (Ian).



Extract 6.2: Ian's Surprise View



Extract 6.3: Mike's Surprise View

What immediately resonates is the visuality that defines Ian's account of the space. He reads from the video the referents his landscape engagement negotiates, illustrating how the visible is entwined with the visual and a process of envisioning in practice. Ian's composed visuality of Surprise is shaped through the temporalities he reads through the windscreen. In noting the future visibility of his drive, he enfolds a performance of envisioning into the production of his Surprise taskscape. The immediate narrative was that of the scenic visuality, thus in the interview I asked him, "*do you remember the parts of the picture that are the road?*" in an attempt to explore how his visible field is composed in the moment between the driver-car-road. His response was illuminating, as he replied, "*yes because I'm having to watch the road and the kerb and the angle position, the sharp turn, at the same time*" (Ian). The recognition of the road in his performance he then went onto explain is experienced, for him, in an interplay between the visibilities of the road and the visualising of Surprise as scenic: "*I always look at the view but I'm also at the same time looking at the road to make sure I don't go off the edge*" (Ian). So it emerged how entangled within his taskscape of Surprise is a situated negotiation of the driver-car-road relationality – a point I pushed at for further explanation, asking, "*do you think the road is part of surprise view?*":

"yes [pause] yes I do because without the road I wouldn't be looking at it for a start. It's the road which influences the sweep and it's that that gives you that panorama the road does that for you which it wouldn't do if it was a straight road it would just look like that all the time. I think it's because surprise view is what it is because you come from not seeing it, round a corner, there it is and then it's gone. [...] so it is very transient and it's the road that makes it transient" (Ian).

Thus, the visibility of the road, and from the road, for Ian, engenders Surprise *per se*. The road is inherently enmeshed in the production of the space both visibly and visually, since the seeing of the space in Ian's performance emphasises the mobility of the encounter. The road engenders that mobility because it necessitates that the driver-car navigates it according to the learned visibilities of the car and the road that disciplines Ian (see earlier discussion). Ian *sees with* the car and the road – to reassert Wylie's (2006) notion – to produce his landscape engagement. Hence, the panorama he describes is performative, made through the driver-car-road relationality; a production of rural space through the visualisation his mobility enables.

The sense of transience and interplay between the scenic and a seeing-with the car also resonates in Aneka's reflections on rural driving more broadly. In general interview conversation, Surprise was used as an example to explain how she values seeing in rural space. Although she is rarely driving through Surprise view, similarly to Ian she depicts a scenic visualisation of the rural framed through the affordances of the car:

"I have the luxury of being a passenger and looking through a window so I really like going though Surprise. I like those moments when the scenery

opens up and you emerge from Sheffield and you go out onto a plateau and suddenly you can see and you can assess the visibility and see what kind of weather is coming in I like those” (Aneka).

There are multiple visualities at play within Aneka’s performance. In anticipating the scenic, she draws what is visible in practice through her visualising of the space. Moreover in identifying Surprise as a ‘moment when the scenery opens up’, she differentiates her production of this space. Surprise, for Aneka, is a confluence of visibility on a landscape she has been visualising in practice. In noting how the ‘weather coming in’ has import in her taskscape she, like Ian, is also envisioning the future temporality within that moment, through her performance of seeing.

The temporal is equally negotiated in this space in other ways. Family trips to the countryside in the car that Lynne undertook, at least half a century ago, shape the way she understands her performance in that space today. Not only does this connect back through the importance of recognising the temporalities in each negotiation of the taskscape, her performance establishes that this colloquial space has been in local social memory for a significant period; so much so that Lynne was more familiar with the idiom than the actual geographical location when I pressed her on it. Critically, her performance is characterised by expressions of seeing (visibility) and looking (visualising), of visuality shaping how she wants to experience this space, and valuing doing so enough to motivate her to share that experience with others (envisioning):

“I would drive slower and I would be looking at, I mean we knew it as the surprise valley, I don’t know that’s just a local name or whether we just called it that [...] I think it’s called the Hope Valley actually but my parents always called it the surprise valley. As you go round the corner I think I suppose it’s a surprise and it’s sort of laid out. [...] And yes I mean every time I’ve driven down there I think oh, I’d like to slow down and have a look but it is very, it is, particularly busy that road [...] the idea was you drove down this road and then you saw the surprise valley so we must have been driving thinking about it. So I suppose I’ve only ever really noticed it from a car. [...] if there was somewhere to pull in I might do. [...] the best views you can’t actually stop. So in a way it’s quite crucial that you’re driving, otherwise you wouldn’t really see them” (Lynne).

Lynne performs surprise through the car, aware of how her driving nuances to produce her taskscape: slowing to ‘look’ she makes visible her visualisations of the space. She highlights how moments along the rural drive are spatial engagements in tension between the road, the car and the driver, but produced through the situated experiences and sensibilities an individual brings to consuming the encounter. Lynne would ideally like to stop to engage with the landscape but she believes this is not physically possible, concluding instead that the space is itself produced through automobility (akin to Ian). She concedes that to effectively engage with what Surprise offers, to ‘really see’, then the car is an integral part.

Yet, for Lynne (not true for Ian) there is little explicit recognition of the car or the road architecture as a visible entity in the encounter. The road is the agent of mobility, rather than rendered visible. Moreover, Lynne enfold into Surprise the past temporalities of childhood sightings, noting how setting the (rural) landscape up as for ocular consumption endures in her performance. At this geographical fulcrum, for Lynne, congeals the histories and present temporalities of rural driving practices that animating the taskscape with ‘dimensionality’ (Schatzki, 2006) of enduring practices that produce the experience as Surprise view *per se*. Furthermore, connecting this back through to the question of rurality is key here. In Lynne’s account of performance (and in the two previous), the importance of the mobile visibility of rural space is emphasised. That rural space is conceived as made through the driver-car-road- relationality in a dynamic and enlivened engagement illuminates how performances producing rural space are situated, contingent and inherently visual.

However, the discursive notion of rurality as idyllic endures in practice of Surprise too. This is nowhere more acutely expressed than in Mike’s production of Surprise:

“you turn round top of surprise view at top about Hathersage I love that. It reminds me of that opening bit in the Lord of the Rings, you know, with the little houses on the other side of the hill” (Mike).

In seeing the rural space through his filmic rendered imaginaries, Mike visualises Surprise as being reminiscent of other idyllic rural landscapes he’s encountered – like in Lord of the Rings. His seeing is a visual encounter because he’s producing the visible in his taskscape through his notion of rurality. Yet from Mike’s post-videoing interview, where he was confronted with himself producing Surprise, the following reflection on his performance illuminates a conceptual and performative disconnect:

“it is amazing in it though that you’ve got these images in your head that you pick up from when you’re out there and when I look at myself there you’ve hardly got time to look out have you? So it’s gotta be snapshots. As soon as you look you’ve gotta get your eyes back on’t road or looking in a mirror” (Mike).

For Mike, in performing ‘snapshots’ he renders his experience as inherently visual and, albeit momentary, the engagements he has accrued continue to shape the visual realm he produces conceptually, such that Surprise endures in his rural taskscape. Yet the video data made him aware of how his body is disciplined to the road, docile in its driver-car-road performance even, whereby his doing of practice takes him back to the performance of driving far more quickly than he anticipated. For him, he sees visibly what he has been visualising, envisioning from the drive itself, such that when he was shown the scant moment he actually is presented with Surprise, he starts to understand his performance differently. The romanticism that he anticipates shapes what he sees, how he sees it, and ultimately how he remembers it.

6.4.2 Surprise as Rural Space

Momentarily the road surrounds (see earlier chapter) provide an expanded horizon that has emerged as a socially reproduced quintessential rural space within the drive of this road for some. It is the driver-car-road relationality that engenders Surprise to be intersubjectively produced: each participant above gestures at their situated rendering of surprise, through the temporal memories, filmic visualisations or what the engagement with its visibilities mean in practice, such as the weather. Thus, emergent from the data are numerous performances that reinforce the role of the visible, visual and envisioning through the driver-car –road relationality that ultimately produces Surprise as rural space *per se*. There are larger scale processes that shape Surprise which are arguably informed, at least in part, by the notion of rurality as much as by the regulating (national) frameworks that the car and road embody (see, Edensor, 2007). To recognise in the landscape a momentary vista, recall and recapitulate it as rural in its own right, demands an appropriation of rural discourse to comprehend value of it. Each of the participants' performances explored above contribute to the contention that Surprise view is produced through situated taskscapes of practice. Moreover, Surprise emerges as rural, not because it is within the Peak District National Park, or because it is located in the countryside of Derbyshire, it emerges as rural space because participants produce it as such through dominant discourses of rurality.

At Surprise, seeing is complex in its performance and contingent upon the driver-car-road relationality at any given moment. Throughout discussion of Surprise, the participants oscillate between using seeing in their taskscape as 'functional' or as 'volitional' (Sobchack, 1992); talking about driving as 'functional' disciplined visibilities, or visualising the scenery as 'volitional'. However it is not productive to conceive of the space as produced through divergent notions of seeing, when in practice the two are inevitably entangled. Rather, what emerges is how the production of Surprise ensues through the enmeshing of visibility performances and across situated articulations of driving practice. Seeing Surprise is both of the space, 'sight', and from the space, 'site' (see, Urry, 1993) across multiple performed taskscapes, thus enduring practices intersubjectively produce it as rural space. Moreover, it manifests as rural since (at least) some of the relations invested within it are indicative of discursively rural values.

Whilst the values of discursive ruralities can be understood to endure through the ongoing performance of Surprise, as a space, its practice somewhat reifies the notion of rurality by being understood as rural space *per se*. By rendering what is visually rural as visible from the car in the moment of turning the Surprise bend, the space comes into being as rural space through enduring subjective engagements with it in practice. Rural space, here geographically renowned as Surprise, is made through the entanglement of multiple taskscapes across temporalities of practice. Here, it is useful to highlight that the production

of Surprise as rural space transpires from positioning rural space as emergent through intersubjective performances in practice. This is a key point I shall return to in the later chapter addressing rural and practice head on.

Yet, rather than appropriating notions of a homogenous rural, the performances illuminate a geographically contingent and heterogeneous production of rurality. Drivers' subjective and socially negotiated positionalities animate this landscape and produce the celebrated Surprise as a rural space *per se*. The role of the visible, visual and envisaged in shaping how the space is socially practiced is embraced through the subjective scale: the idiom Surprise is geographically contingent too. A production of this space as rural and the necessary journeying through it in that direction (unlike in my experience) means Surprise is inherently geographically contingent. It is rural space belonging to the vernacular of those whose driver-car-road performances negotiate 'rural' discourse in their production of Surprise, but at the same time envelop into their taskscapes the social relations they have experienced at various times and spaces in order to reach the idiomatic space. Thus Surprise emerges, endures and is empowered by successive performances engaging to produce it. And in doing so, the rural emerges too as geographically contingent in its production. The rurality of Surprise belongs to a vernacular social space that can be traced back (in the data at least) for fifty years, and across the performances of a wide variety of participants resident around, and particularly to the East, of this famous bend.

6.5 In/Sights

Visuality matters in a myriad of ways to the production of rural space when driving in and through it. This chapter disentangles performances – using visible, visual and envisioning – to frame discussion of the import visibility has within the subjective rendering of rural experience. I have discussed each of these in turn to demonstrate how visibility, or seeing, is an integral dimension that is blurred by the material and social conventions of cars and their use, experienced through the body of the driver, with important theoretical implications for how performances of rural discourse can be unpacked. What emerges is how visibility is inherently visual, and that to envision requires understanding situated engagements with the landscape through temporal registers.

Thus the chapter focuses on visuality against a theoretical framing that situates seeing within a wider context of always being performed from an embodied perspective. The analysis presents the visuality of rural driving as already embodied, not detached from it. Moreover, in emphasising the myriad dimensions of visuality negotiated within the performance of rural driving, the chapter takes forward a conceptual framing that emphasises the import of the visible, visual and envisioning for performances of rural space through its empirical discussion. By bringing the notions of visuality into collective

discussion, it is here where the chapter establishes the further contribution it makes to the thesis in two key ways: the importance of visibility within the practice of rural space, and the way in which rural spaces are produced through the intersubjectivity of multiple rural driving taskscape.

Moreover, rural space can be collectively produced intersubjectively cohering across space and time. This conclusion is illustrated through discussion of Surprise, where situated taskscape of landscape production coalesce around the same geographical point; demonstrating the value in conceiving rural driving practice as through this conceptual framework. The myriad of sensibilities that shape Surprise's constellation as a rural space serve to reinforce further how enmeshing analyses of subjective taskscape with theories of practice is conceptually rich for unpacking the data. Surprise as a space illuminates how social intersubjectivities of a Schatzkian practice theory – whereby 'practices...are social phenomena' (Schatzki, 2002:87) – engender the production of rural space. Moreover, focusing on Surprise enables the thesis to consider the way in which the visible, the visual and envisioning enmesh in the production of 'rural' space, since the themes are shown to be contingently entangled in the production of Surprise. Ultimately, the outcome of this strand of analysis is to open up space to think about the practising of rural space, a question I return to in the final chapter of the thesis.

Vision demands an engagement with the temporalities of performance, and in doing so necessitates a reflection through the body. Temporalities enfold in the taskscape of rural driving performances, bringing the visible, the visual and, in some instances, envisioned visualities to the fore in practice. To see is to already be selective in where and how one is looking. A phenomenology of the ocular, therefore, must arguably always return to what is shaping that which is being seen; as the body is used for visibly, visually and envisioning for the complex mediation of self and body rendered through the social and spatial. What landscape phenomenology (Ingold, 1993; 2001; Wylie, 2006; 2007; 2009), the wider turn towards the non-representational productions of knowledge (see, Thrift, 2008) and specifically Schatzkian practice theories allow (Schatzki, 1996; 2001; 2002), within this analysis, is to approach the visibility of rural as relational. Understanding vision as an integral dimension embedded and relationally negotiated within performance means that Halfacree's (2006) triad can be conceived as producing rural space through a situated, embodied scale, subjectively attentive to visibility.

Furthermore, in asserting that seeing, looking and imagining are negotiated within the performance of driving in the countryside, it is imperative to highlight how such conceptualisation reifies the countryside and rural *per se*. Within the chapter, objectification of the rural manifests in participants' performances. Arguably such performances serve to reinforce discursive practices that reproduce rural space through dominant, idyllic

discourses. Consequently, discourse can be conceived as entrenched in visuality performances embedded in practice. But the data also demonstrate how there are facets of rural driving practice that reproduce relationships with rurality that go beyond objectifying it too. Two key contentions subsequently resonate. The first is how these findings have important implications for the way in which we can begin to unpack how people relate to the convergence of an 'ideational' and 'geographical' countryside (see, Halfacree, 2006). Secondly, the selectivity in rural appropriation leaves the solidity of what rural is rather limp and in the doldrums; as being only definable subjectively. These are contentions that I pick up again to explore more robustly in the final chapter entitled *rural*.

Although the key reflection is that a visual primacy to engaging with the rural through the drive is evident, the chapter does little to draw out how that rurality is produced through the bodies of individuals, beyond placing visuality within an embodied negotiation. So to go forward from here, the chapter has established the import of visuality, but I recognise the need to further unravel how rural space is being negotiated in embodied registers beyond visuality. There is a plethora of data that makes explicit the ways in which individuals' bodies negotiate producing rural space while navigating in and through it by rural driving; an endeavour I attend to in the next chapter.

• 7 •

RIDE

7.1 Ride in Practice

“it’s also a sense of, I don’t know what you call it, an extension of your physical ability which means you can get around where you couldn’t before” (Rita).

Rita is talking about her car. For her, the car is a means to leave the rural hamlet she resides in and go further than her body can physically take her. For Rita, the movement the car offers her is tangible in bodily registers because she recognises her inability to get to places without it. While the car was once her connection to professional and social lives in Sheffield, since retiring, its connection to her identity has nuanced too. Now Rita volunteers for a community transport network, driving elderly local residents when they need to access services beyond their reach. The outcome is Rita positions the car as a pivotal materiality to facilitate movement beyond her body’s capability. Her quote thus highlights how the automotion the car enables can be conceptually understood as a form of movement that augments the body. The interesting questions that unravel in the chapter though, are how does this movement manifest? What is materially integral in this ‘driver-car’ (Dant, 2004) understanding of driving performance Rita gestures at? And, moreover, how does the car and the body relationally engage with rural space in situated practice?

But, first, a note about the concept of *ride*. Ride is the way in which I propose the movement in practice of driving can be conceptually understood. Ride is intended to capture the relationality in practice of the driver-car-road negotiation but with emphasis on the embodied sensibilities that emerge when the subjective driving experience is conceptualised as always embedded in the car space in automotion. Moreover, by automotion, I want to emphasise the in-practice movement that the car generates. Thus, herein, automotion refers to the moving car. It’s important to delineate the concept of ride, and its reliance on automotion, since this chapter attempts to disentangle the car and body and road in subjective performance, for which situating the narrative in movement is critical.

Yet, it is not without purpose that I adopt the concept ride to gesture to the metaphor of rural driving practice as a ride in and of itself (here I am specifically thinking of literature that propagates rural driving as rides in the countryside; *The Wind in the Willows* (Grahame, 1993), for example). But here I employ the notion of ride strictly as a relationally produced negotiation of driving practice. The ride comes into existence through the enmeshing of the

body with the car and the road through which this movement occurs. The ride is thus best conceptualised as an enduring event occurring within the lifespan of the entities it encompasses.

Theoretically, the ride is a taskscape (Ingold, 1993; 2001) continually produced through situated performances that endure in practice. In the chapters that precede this one, I have continually returned to articulating taskscapes of engagement with rural space. In this chapter, the taskscape is disentangled in terms of its material, embodied and spatial composition. I take the ride therefore as a starting point that assumes that experience is relationally, subjectively and contingently produced through situated performances which endure as (rural) driving practice.

However, understanding Rita's position through Miller's (2010) material culture work is particularly illustrative of the challenge the chapter faces. Miller reminds that cars are fundamentally material entities, objects in the world within which we inhabit that we subjectively negotiate. He also usefully notes that 'cars, once they exist, become part of what we are' (Miller, 2010: 59). By extension, that interrelation between the subjective body and the car is key to disentangle through a material lens in situated performances. Moreover, Waitt and Lane (2007) demonstrate that paying attention to the car-body relationality, conceptualised here through 'driver-car' (Dant, 2004), in the context of specific spaces necessitates unpacking the material dimensions of the car.

So, it is here the thesis attends to unravelling the driver-car-road paradigm that has been developed throughout the earlier chapters. To do this I separate the analysis into three discussions that cumulatively develop through the concept of ride. Briefly, these begin with attention to the inherent materiality of the car and body in performance specifically (since road has been largely explored in the earlier chapter of the same name). To build from there, I then turn to consider the way in which the driver-car-road relationality subjectively plays out in movement. This discussion illuminates how as bodies, drivers accommodate and adapt to the materiality of their cars. The final discussion focuses on how driver-car-road performances negotiate notions of rural in practice. Still, before I undertake the analytical endeavour, first I briefly scope out how I conceptualise the body before assembling the salient notions together to take with me into analytical discussion of the data.

7.2 Framing within the Theory

Thus, this chapter builds on earlier theoretical framings, to engage with the data, by directing attention much more acutely at how the body comes to be experienced in relation to cars and subjective productions of rural space. To situate the body within this negotiation I want to reassert some of the foundational literature that I initially explored in the conceptual framework. I return first to remind of the notion of relationality, since this forms the basis

for unravelling the data on the more embodied dimensions of rural driving. With this notion readily in hand, I discuss the conceptual pairing I have been pivoting between throughout the thesis thus far provided by Schatzkian ontologies and Ingoldian phenomenology, to explore their purchase in terms of theoretically unpacking bodily scales. This discussion steps forward by recalling key practice studies that emphasise the role of materiality, to then progress into discussion of the car context, noting key works that inform the way the empirical material can be understood. Thus this section provides a theoretical backdrop for the ensuing analysis that follows.

Relationality underpins the way the body is comprehended as a scale, a site, a context through which experience is rendered. In concluding the conceptual framework discussion I referenced Blackman and Venn's (2010) description of the relationality paradigm, to substantiate why such conceptual approaches as relationality hold much purchase for theoretically unravelling empirical data on the driver-car-rural road negotiation. Thus relationality, 'assumes from the outset that we are dealing with thoroughly entangled processes' (*ibid.*: 10). It is in this vein that this chapter brings to the fore the bodily scale: that is, through thinking the empirical data on the driver-car- road relationally, thus emerging how negotiating the body is first and foremost the basis for comprehending the practice.

The phenomenological basis that Ingold's (1993; 2001) 'taskscape' concept emerges from critically makes the bodily scale the foundational tenet. To conceive of the taskscape is to place the subjective, situated body of, in this empirical context, the driver and frame all productions of rural space as negotiated through it. The critical question that emerges is how the body generating the taskscape inevitably deals with the materialities that occupy its production. For Ingold, the material dimension of the taskscape is not made explicit. Instead, it is more enlightening to return to the phenomenology that informs Ingold's body politic to unpack where the body is materially conceived.

When thinking about relationality between bodies and cars, reacquainting with Merleau-Ponty reminds that contextually situating the body scale as negotiated in context is imperative:

"in short, my body is not only an object among all other objects, a nexus of sensible qualities amongst others, but an objective which is sensitive to all the rest" (Merleau-Ponty, 1958: 275).

The body in performance is both relationally negotiating the material surrounds it occupies whilst simultaneously being nuanced too by those material surrounds. Thus this extract from Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological theorisation of the body reminds that to conceptualise how the subjective body performs in practice necessitates recognising that the body-object is fluid and relational to that which surrounds it. Moreover, Merleau-Ponty's position also

gestures at the importance of context that bodies inhabit. Arguably, paying attention to that which individuals surround their bodies with opens up critical space to reflect on their bodily performances. The bodies that emerge in the empirical data therefore should be understood as negotiations of a scale that is in flux with its material environment. This posits the car as a fundamental context in which to situate the automotive body, since following Merleau-Ponty, the car is positioned as integral to the bodily negotiation of performance.

This emphasis on body-in-context is echoed in Schatzkian ontologies of practice. Schatzki's (1996; 2001; 2002) Theories of Practice emphasise the bodily scale as the site where performances unfold, insofar as practices are composed of "bodily doings and sayings" (Schatzki, 2002: 72). Moreover, for Schatzki, the body is itself a negotiated entity (analogous to Merleau-Pontean phenomenology) whereby in the performance of practices, 'bodily ... emphasise[s] that they are things people do with their bodies, including whatever prosthetic parts and extensions (e.g., canes) bodies possess' (Schatzki, 2002: 72). The import of the body-with-materialities in practice has been demonstrated most notably in Shove and Panzar's (2005) seminal work on Nordic walking. This work offers a means to focus on the body through a tri-fold framework of 'skill', 'materiality' and 'meaning' as the composites of practice, offering an empirical example of how bodies and materialities are inherently intertwined in the subjective production of practices. Thus to return to the assertions in the opening conceptual framework to the thesis, the prevailing contribution is that practices are inherently bodily negotiations in space that necessitate conceptual cohesion, embodied skill and material competence to perform. From this I take that in the performance of any practice, including driving, the body should be relationally explored through the material that augments the body in practice. It is from this basis that data around individuals and their cars was sought, since it potentially offered opportunity to greater explore the practice of rural driving *per se*.

Since cars augment the body in a multitude of ways – for example, by enabling automotion, by demanding they occupy cars and the road in particular configurations, by accommodating them in subjectively defined temperatures – the literature that explores cars as sites of human-material interface are key to note here. Particular framings that are useful belong to the work specifically focusing on the automotive body and the way that the body can experience (and thus produce in practice) rural car spaces. A pivotal paper that I again return to is Dant's (2004) work where he emphasises that the car-body relation should always be conceptualised relationally through the notion of 'driver-car'. Dant develops the theoretical position that the car affords an embodied relationality to space, critiquing Gibson (1979, *cited in* Dant, 2004:64), progressing to suggest that 'the human driver is habitually embodied within the car as an assemblage that can achieve automobility' (Dant, 2004: 73). Dant's suggestion, that cars and bodies are entangled in subjective performance, draws from

Merleau-Pontean phenomenology, to conclude that the driver performance is produced from a carnal geography of the driving body. It has been to this entanglement that the thesis has thus far been developing as a framing for unpacking how the rural drive plays out in practice. However, this chapter is the opportunity to direct acute attention to how the ‘driver-car’ (and road, as I have suggested earlier) relationality empirically manifests.

So whilst Dant’s notion continues to hold purchase, other mobilities scholars offer further key concepts that also shape the way that the data can be understood. Here I want to briefly note those that resonate in the empirical discussion. Notably, there is John Urry’s (2006) seminal work that captures the material relationality at play in the driver-car-road performative negotiation:

“The driver’s body is itself fragmented and disciplined to the machine, with eyes, ears, hands and feet, all trained to respond instantaneously and consistently, while desires to stretch, to change position, to doze or look around are suppressed. ... The body of the car provides an extension of the human body, surrounding the fragile, soft and vulnerable human skin with a new steel skin” (Urry, 2006: 24)

By using anthropomorphic notions to describe the driver-car entanglement – ‘skin’ – Urry’s reflection alludes to the intricacies of working with a car materiality. Driving bodies can be understood, in a Foucauldian sense, as ‘disciplined’ in performing (auto)motion. Thinking through Foucault’s (1975) notion of ‘discipline’ resonates with the relationality Urry theoretically denotes between the driver-car. The Foucauldian reading of Urry’s work is a pivotal theoretical position that I develop through the empirical discussion.

Furthermore, not only thinking of the driver-car as disciplined, but simultaneously as performative and experiential is vital when exploring the body subject’s engagement with automobility in practice. Sheller’s (2005) reflections on the power of emotion are particularly potent:

“emotion itself arises out of particular material relations and sensations, and at the same time organises material relations and sensations into wider aesthetic and kinaesthetic cultures” (Sheller, 2004: 223).

In locating experiential dimensions as emotions, Sheller’s work brings to the fore how the driver-car relationality is embodied in registers beyond the tactile interfaces of car/body, rather in emotive ways. However, although I do find some of her narrative problematic as she seems to set up emotions and feelings as interchangeable and ultimately disembodied, the work offers a key basis for holistically unpacking the driver-car-road relationality as rendered through (embodied) emotive dimensions.

Finally, the authors discussed above (save for Shove and Panzar) begin from an *a priori* position. As the chapter unfolds it emerges how empirically some of these positions hold much more purchase in terms of unpacking the data than others. Moreover, the

discussion of empirical material presents opportunities to develop and critique these authors (and others) in the unravelling of this chapter's contribution.

It is from this theoretical basis that I explore the empirical data herein. In the discussion that ensues of 'stuff', 'detritus' and 'equipment', I firstly explore how auxiliary material objects that augment the car illuminate an inherent embodied disposition in subjective experiences of the rural drive. Through emphasising the role of the body in selection and de-selection of permanent and provisional items to prepare for countryside driving, this lays the foundations for the chapter's argument for the performance of rural driving as inherently shaped by an embodied imaginary of rural space. In the subsequent sections, analysis turns to consider the more experiential dimensions of rural driving and how they manifest in bodily registers. Discussion of the data illustrates a key tension in the driver-car-road relationality of the rural drive. Firstly I attend to the data that positions the driver-car-as performatively in-tuned in practice. In the latter section, where I more explicitly focus the discussion on notions of rurality, it emerges how the driver-car relationality is performatively in flux in rural spatial contexts. It is in this penultimate section that the chapter's broader contribution is articulated: here I emphasise the importance notions of rural space hold for the driver-car-road relationality in subjective performances. Finally, the reflective remarks consolidate the contribution made from analyses in conceptual terms, and look forward into the conclusion of the thesis.

7.3 Materially (Un)packing the Car

Cars hold stuff, detritus and equipment. They are materialities that can accrue other materialities as practices ensue through, with and around them. In this section I consider the multitude of additional materialities that come to be associated with cars' use in practice. Through this analysis I initiate the wider argument of the chapter in highlighting how lived bodies frame the way that the rural drive is engaged with. However this section also provides insight into how car/bodies are conceptualised as static spaces, as a receptacle for things, whilst simultaneously equally conceived as ever (to be) on the move; thus mobility and immobility are both critically important in the understanding of practice (see Bissell, 2007).

Following Ingold's exchange on the subject of materials and materiality (see, Ingold, 2007*b*; 2007*c*; Miller, 2007; Tilley, 2007), I find it useful to thinking about cars through his paradigm. It reminds of the inherent material dimensions of the car and to not take materiality for granted. In simplistic terms, Ingold (*ibid.*) suggests that the material of a given entity prevails over and above its composition as a materiality. Thus cars' material presence could be understood as a mix of metals, fibres, rubbers, oils, liquids, for example, that combine to function as the materiality of any given car. However, I would argue that cars, with their intricately interwoven mix of materials, offer a means to critique this

viewpoint, since the amalgamation of materials supersedes those individual materials' ability to function independently. When thinking of the car in the practice of rural driving, it's critical to situate it as a materiality subjectively created through performance. Thus the car is not to be rendered as *fait accompli*, rather as processual and produced in subjective and situated ways, through the stuff that they can be augmented with.

7.3.1 'Stuff' 'Detritus' 'Equipment'

When people were asked about what they keep in the car, a myriad of materialities were recalled. Methodologically, the question was borne out of a filtering process to funnel participants towards thinking about the materialities of rural driving *per se*, but the data generated in that process illustrates key reflections on the car materiality in the context of (rural) driving practice. The catalogue of items collected or accrued in their cars that each of the participants below could recite was lengthy:

"There's a whole basket with an array of things like spare bulbs, windscreen washer, various, you know, brush, various things. Really don't use any of them but it's kind of a comfort blanket in a way to have them in there. There's a warning triangle thing that I've had forever, that sits in there [...] there's a tarpaulin which is very handy. There's a, there's a cagoule, a spare cagoule in the back of the car which can also be handy. [...] I've got a bag of rubbish [laughs]. The scrapers and maps. I keep a general atlas in there and an a to z of London in there. An a to z of Sheffield in there. There's a few cds, there's probably a torch which may or may not work. Pencils and paper and that sort of thing. And the service book and the instruction book, very important. [...] I keep shopping bags in there as well. It's just easier to keep things in the car than keep them in the house" (Lynne).

Lynne's stuff augments the materiality of the car with varying degrees of relevance to the actual automotion it enables. Items are stored in the car as the car highlights how they are spaces that form an extension of home (Urry and Sheller, 2001). In storing items within the car, its material affordances (see, Gibson, 1967) as a vehicle are nuanced. Of these materialities Lynne stows inside, the car arguably necessitates some for its use. For example, the car can play music, but Lynne requires her CDs to do so. However other items are about extending preparedness in case the car fails to deliver automobility, warmth or a clear windscreen through which to see. And Alison is not alone in her accumulation of car stuff. In a similar vein, Nicky also kept a myriad of materialities in her car and until selling it hadn't realised how much had accumulated as part of her everyday usage:

"what do I keep in the car? Music, what else do I keep in the car, my mileage book so I can record my work miles, a spare set of light bulbs, mostly to do with keeping myself safe actually that's interesting. A triangle, a spare wheel ... If it was winter generally speaking from about November onwards I would always keep a snow shovel and a blanket and some wellies in the back of the car, irrespective of where I was going just in case. If I was

going out for the day we'd probably put food, picnic stuff in and obviously flasks and things to have a drink from. I'd normally have CDs and things in the car. What else? Usually a spare pair of shoes you know for driving in. What else, yeah and perhaps a coat or something like that. ... I know people who carry grit in the cars in the winter [laughs] I never went that far! [laughing]. And things like jump-leads I used to carry those as well. I'm just trying to remember. I know when I had to let the car go, they came to pick it up and I had to empty everything out and I couldn't believe how much stuff there was in, but it's all it wasn't just rubbish it was stuff that I actually would need and would use. It's almost like a second home isn't it?" (Nicky).

On the one hand items Nicky keeps in the car – jump-leads, snow-shovels and bulbs – are about maintaining the (legal) mobility of her vehicle. But on the other, there's another collective of objects – warning triangles, torches and first-aid kits – that are valued in the context of mediating periods of immobility. This reminds of Bissell's (2009) notable paper on the import immobility has in practice, but embellishes his argument through the empirical findings that stuff can mitigate the perceived risk from being immobile. But a third theme emerges too, since the materialities that are collected are a consequence of the way the body comes to be perceived through the car. The potential for distancing the self from sources of food necessitates a picnic and flask. The weather may necessitate a coat. The journey may require some entertainment in the form of self-selected music on CDs. These themes link with the earlier extract from Alison, but Nicky offers her own analysis when she recognises that connecting her stuff is about protecting herself beyond what her empty car can. Adding items to maintain mobility, to mediate against immobility and to mitigate the impact of being immobile with the car are all arguably embodied engagements with cars in practice. What is learned from Alison and Nicky's list of car detritus is how their car spaces accommodate their own preferences and confidences; both in terms of the car's functionality and their ability to remain auto-mobile. Arguably, interconnecting these three themes of stuff is an embodied negotiation of car use. Immobility is problematic for the self because the car affords distances of movement that are on the whole impractical for the body to achieve on an everyday basis. Finding oneself stationary, far from your destination, is an immobile moment not because you can't physically move, but because the car often moves you further than you would want to go independently. Moreover, it was a sentiment shared by other participants, including Anne who was keen to note that in her boot she keeps "*essentials ... for breakdowns and burst tyres and things*". Immobility of the car emerges as a concern for immobility of the car/body; that consequently manifests in the way that cars can be augmented with additional materialities. There are further themes to draw out however within the stuff that comes to accumulate and collect in the imaginaries and performances of countryside driving.

The subsequent questions following 'what do you keep in the car' were concerned

with the auxiliary materialities that were selected and carried specifically in a *rural* drive. I think it's important to briefly acknowledge here how asking such a question inevitably has methodological effect, insofar as asking whether for a countryside drive any stuff is put in the car implies that stuff may be needed. Moreover, it also has the epistemological effect of setting the rural up as a distinct space which is conceptually and/or geographically distant, distinct and/or separate that may require particular materialities (this is a critique of the research that I attend to in the following chapter). However, as the following data illustrates, it was an important question to ask to open up what makes rural driving a distinct practice, and critically how or what are the associated material dimensions that contribute to that distinction.

Initially it emerged from the data that associated practices of using rural space were interconnected to practices of rural driving and car use. Cars, as receptacles for things, enable individuals to carry with them the materialities they might associate with particular (largely recreational) performances in rural space. Performances such as fishing - *"to take a lot of fishing gear, probably about fifty, sixty kilos of fishing gear on a bus is just a non-starter really"* (Derek) – are facilitated by the car. Similarly, Robert suggested that painting, sketching and photography in rural space are facilitated by the car: *"you could take all your painting stuff in the back of the car instead of lumbering it around"*. The physical reference to carrying equipment is shared between these two respondents, both of whom position the car as a material space that extends their bodily capacities to carry the other equipment they require in their rural spaces.

Similarly, walking in rural spaces is facilitated through the carrying capacity of the car boot. For example, Will mentioned the equipment he augments his car with, not necessarily their bodies, in order to go walking or cycling in rural space:

"if we're going in the winter time we'll take waterproofs and walking boots and whatever else is necessary. Summer obviously we don't bother with the waterproofs, well not all of them anyway. So yeah it equipment selection depends on time of year and what you're going to do" (Will).

Will has an imaginary of using rural space that is relative to the season and his activity, but embedded within his production of rural engagement is the experience of the car's carrying capacity to facilitate producing this rural experience with these materialities. Moreover, Anne equally positions the car as a material space 'essential' for her *"wellies...every combination of things, and food"*. In both instances these individuals cite the car as a key space that augments their bodily capacity to carry the materialities that are performatively integral to subjective productions of rural space. So 'equipment' comes to be about the car enabling particular material performances in rural spaces.

By extension, recognising how the stuff that is settling in these respondents cars, and

populating their practices in rural space, is illustrative of particular relationships they have to their bodies. Each of the participants' ideas about using rural space and the associated stuff they require come back to an embodied reflection on the practice they intend to enact; either they're loathed to endure carrying the equipment they need without a car (fishing, painting), or they see the car as a vehicle to hold the stuff that they anticipate their body might need (cycling, walking). But often these items are integrated into rural driving practice (whether they are used or not) because they're material entities that mitigate against periods of immobility. What is learned through this analysis therefore is the inherent dynamism in materialities that augment the car, shaped by attitudes to immobility and the practices individuals want to perform once they have reached rural space. Thus, the car enables its augmentation by providing vestibules that stuff can be stowed in, permanently or temporarily, such that what a car materially entails is not to be taken for granted.

7.3.2 Negotiating Body in Practice

Whilst it emerges that the materiality of the car is in flux, here I focus on how the body being negotiated in practice is similarly unstable. Through unpacking the stuff profiles, this illustrates how other bodies are rendered in particular ways and brought to the fore in practice. In the analysis below, the data highlights how negotiating the bodies of cars' other occupants can be more important for some individuals than their own. In teasing out the other body imaginaries shaping practice, it emerges that there are a couple of key reflections. Firstly, parenting demands thinking the driver-car-road relationality through an imaginary of what the children may need. Secondly, the key reflection is how inherently spatial this negotiation is in practice. What emerges from discussing the stuff people modify their cars with, is that the bodies shaping practice are being rendered through an imaginary of rural space.

When parents discussed their car's stuff profiles in relation to their children's needs, the driver-car-road relationality was intrinsically shaped by their performance of parenting children in rural spaces. For Eleanor and Shaun, stuff in the car for rural driving was about ensuring their young daughter had what she legally and socially 'needs'; a 'car seat', 'coats, bags' and 'a couple of snacks'. Whilst these materialities do not overtly reference notions of discursive rurality, the implication from Eleanor and Shaun was that rural driving, for them, did not require much out of the ordinary in terms of accommodating their daughter's body in the drive, yet they both instantly referenced her needs as key within the materialities they enhance their car with. However this negotiation of children's needs was more explicit when Liam discussed what his driver-car-road relationality was:

“well with a child it's quite easy to just throw things in the car like a pushchair, scooter, walking boots ... walking boots often this time of year

because it does get very muddy. And then there's often paraphernalia around children. So pram, a scooter often, crash helmet, and then changes of clothes that sort of thing and a change bag, less of that now. There used to be things like snacks and food more. If we're going on our own it tends to be a bit lighter, change of clothes you know possibly warmer clothes if you need them, maybe a bit of food. That's pretty much it." (Liam).

Things that accompany Liam's rural drive are inherently items that emerge from him thinking through his daughter's needs. When he mentions walking boots, it's not clear whether they're for him or his daughter, the bodily imaginaries shaping his practice are not just his own. What Liam's reflections illuminate, is how bodies are rendered in particular ways dependent upon the destination space: the geographical contingency informs the materialities that fill his car. In anticipating surfaces that are 'muddy', interwoven through his choice of stuff is an imaginary of what the rural space he intends to engage with will require in terms of material preparation; walking boots, for example, for him are key.

Moreover, the nature of the anticipated encounter with rural space nuances how the bodily registers are negotiated in practice. Below Tarek describes, in a similar vein to Liam above, how when 'going for a day' in rural space, materialities are added to the car that are not deemed necessary otherwise. The myriad of items and the complexity with which they're illustrative of the associated bodies in Tarek's car are critical to note:

"I'd take a couple of blankets with us. Take a change of clothes for the kids because they're always wet you know my socks are wet! ... If I go out for the day then you need those things. You definitely need those things. And sometimes, depends on the weather, if it's just nice you think shall I take extra jackets with us? If it's gonna rain you know your waterproofs. If it's not you just wear a fleece. So we've got all that, that's kind of sort of arrangements or preparations that we have to make when we go out yeah ... travelling with kids and if it's cold then at least I've got some blankets ... you don't always prepare yourself for a drive. Say for example if you're going [daughter] comes and tells me dad can I go for a carvery and we decide where to go, maybe go to Owl Bar you know, Moorlands, I don't carry all those things. You're just going and you're just going there and coming back. But if you're going for a day if you're going for a walk or whatever then you need all those provisions. ... water is important ... food in terms of crisps, chocolates, maybe a couple of fruits, that's it. Because you're not gonna be anywhere away for a long time are we? Where we go we know we're within an hour or so, an hour and a half or so and then come back." (Tarek)

Again, common material preparations emerge with earlier respondents' data. These can be thematically grouped into food, children's 'paraphernalia' and protective textiles. However, the extract of data from Tarek also delivers an insight into how contingent the accrual of materialities in the driver-car-road negotiation can be. There is an inherent temporality and performativity – to employ the term such as Gregson and Rose (2005) denote – to the relevance of thinking through the various bodily scales that shape his rural driving. Tarek only renders the production of the rural drive through notions of rurality when it suits him.

When he's going just to get a 'carvery', all of the other material preparations are not deemed necessary. There are several interlinked points to make here. The stuff Tarek put in his car for a day in rural space emerges as shaped by bodily needs of not just himself, but his children also. Bodies of others can be integral to the driver-car-road relationality. Second, and possibly more pertinent, is that when producing the rural drive, Tarek enfolds an imaginary of rural space into his perception of his body needs, and the car becomes the receptacle for the outcome of that negotiation. Whether he anticipates rain and the car carries his waterproofs, or cold temperatures and the car carries blankets, rural space is produced as space to be prepared for, in situated, temporally contingent performances.

What all of these themes share is that they emerge from intimate reflections on bodily needs of both the self and others that are enfolded in the imaginary of rural automobility. The choice of materialities reveals much about the sensibilities with which the rural comes to be considered, in the context of cars. Cars become receptacles for myriads of things that each contribute to producing the rural drive in practice. But, as I discussed in the preceding section, cars problematise bodily reliance, since they enable much greater geographies than can physically be achieved; such that they come to be augmented by materialities to mitigate periods of immobility. Moreover, this analysis suggests that rural space is produced through the bodily dimension as it is conceived in relation to the car. Consequently bodies are subjectively and contingently negotiated in situated productions of a rural drive.

Finally, this chimes with a briefly noted contribution Sheller (2004) makes in her paper on automotive emotions. Here she alludes to her baby's orientation to her car, giving this as an example of the way in which the driver-car-road relationality is inevitably situated. From this minute point, and the analysis above, consequently stems critique of the key literatures' assumptions that initially shaped this chapter. A question that is not addressed by Dant or Urry, in their aforementioned works, is critically, whose body is being negotiated? An individual may always be thinking as a driver in terms of their own driver-car relationship, but they're not always doing so, as Sheller's (2004) reflection, and the data above, illustrates. A key contribution, therefore, is that whilst it's productive to think about the driver-car-road relationality as Dant suggests though 'driver-car', intricately entwining the car and body in practice, it is reductive to conceptualise the body through solely the 'driver' performance, since other bodies matter too. Thus, just as cars cannot be conceptualised as *fait accompli*, similarly the bodily dimension to the driver-car-road negotiation should likewise be situated too.

7.4 Performatively Negotiating the Car

To drive is to perform with and through a car's materiality to achieve motion. Automotion ensues through performance of the driver-car-road relationality, producing, as I noted in the chapter's introduction, a 'ride' through (rural) space as it propels the body. That movement inevitably registers in sensual dimensions: movement in a car is seen, heard, endured in terms of proprioception, temperature and speed, for example. Collectively, the sensual registers that are activated (to a greater or lesser degree) compose the driver-car-road negotiation in movement as a ride. It is from herein in the chapter that I attend to the way in which the ride is interacted with, consciously insofar as participants have articulated it, and thus experienced in movement.

This discussion therefore builds on the initial work of the chapter, to unsettle any taken-for-granted inferences of the 'car' and the 'body' being negotiated, and analyses the data on embodied sensibilities with the car as it moves, through the lens participants each offered. Thus, I am careful to situate this data, in order to contextualise the contribution each makes to broader argument. In the sections that follow, I aim to unsettle any dualistic-thinking that the notion of driver-car might incite by demonstrating the inherent relationality in situated performances that blurs any such divide. I do this firstly by considering how individuals supposedly 'monitor' the car, though in practice are operating a form of self-disciplining, drawing on Foucault. In the second section, I draw out how, for some, the car and body are relationally inseparable in practice; returning to Foucault to unpack how and to what effect that relationality manifests. In the final part of this section I single out a material context – 'older cars' – that illustrates how material nuances in the car resonate in subjective performance.

7.4.1 Monitoring

In practice, it emerges that particular facets of modern cars shape how performances of automobility ensue in situated contexts. In the data below, each of the participants are referring to the relatively recent design development whereby cars can feedback real-time miles per gallon (herein, 'MPG') statistics for the efficiency of the engine as the car is operated. Often a feature on the driver's dashboard, the reading of MPG can fluctuate depending on how the car is driven, the terrain it is traversing and the type of road being navigated. In the first instance, the MPG could be understood as inherently situated and geographically contingent. It is obviously also defined by the make and model of the car. Thus the theme of 'monitoring' emerges from focusing on this niche performance of MPG monitoring whilst practicing (rural) driving. However, I recognise at the outset, and latter discussion attends to this, that monitoring the car is an intrinsic performance of the driver-car-road fundamental to achieve successful, legal and responsible driving. The purpose of

highlighting this specific performance is to illustrate how the driver-car-road relationality is, at least in part, inevitably defined and disciplined by the car as a produced and regulated space.

Thus monitoring the MPG serves as an example of how in automotion, the performance of driving is shaped by the material affordances of the car. In Catherine's description of how she interacts with her Toyota Prius hybrid car, she reveals how the driver-car-road relationality is inherently intertwined with her performative reflexivity:

"I really think about our petrol consumption a lot because there are all sorts of bits of information this thing feeds to you. [...] you can see your sort of average [miles per gallon] ever since you reset the thing actually and kind of play games with yourself. And in fact my husband's doing fantastically badly. [...] because the consumption is always better when I'm driving he's sort of suddenly become competitive and actually driving quite differently. [...] it's not dangerous or whatever it's just a constant, you just glance" (Catherine).

Notably, for Catherine, in being provided with information from the car, her performances engaging with the dashboard's output leads her (and her husband) to practice driving accordingly. Whilst on the one level this may seem obvious – if the car tells you you're running out of petrol you may try to drive accordingly – on another level Catherine's performance of competing with her husband highlights how particular types of information have longer resonances in enduring driving practices. Moreover, in being a Prius, the car's broader environmental ethic arguably resonates too. As the fuel efficiency reading is dynamic in the drive, but also static when the car is turned off, this allows each of the drivers to reflect and compare their driving practices between each other; consequently disciplining one another in their mutual participation. It suggests that in some ways the car is empowered to script the body driving it both in the moment of performance and beyond, but critically, also alludes to how engaging with the car is an active, performed accomplishment through the body. Thus, it emerges that for Catherine's driving body when it does 'just glance' – although it is indefinite what is influencing her ambition to reduce the MPG, for example, be it financial, environmental, social with her husband or otherwise – monitoring the MPG is a performance embedded in their practice, arguably because the car enables such performances. Thus, the notion of discipline, in a Foucauldian sense (Foucault, 1975), can be read through their performances: in motion, looking at the MPG output, means the driving performance is inherently disciplined by the car, but equally because the car enables this facet of performance, the individuals discipline each other's driving practices. The interrelations between enacting checking the MPG as a bodily performance, the materiality of the car (and the cultural significance of the car as a Prius) and the monitoring socially of each other's driving in practice, demonstrates how intertwined driving performances are with the contingencies of car ownership.

Similarly, for Ian, driving the car, and negotiating the driver-car-road relationality between himself and the car's materiality, is achieved through engaging with its feedbacks sensed in bodily registers. Whereas Catherine largely details her driver-car-road relationality through facets of the car's technology, Ian is far more liberal in his performance:

"I guess all drivers probably constantly monitor what the car is doing, you do that automatically. You listen to the engine revs, you listen for problems you know, does it sound right, does it feel right, is it not bumping around have you got a flat tyre you know where you start to sort of, so I think that one does that automatically you know without even thinking about it, it becomes second nature to monitor the car you know in an unconscious kind of way. You know it's there in the background. [pause] Do I think about it when I'm driving? I guess one thinks about the gear you are in. I do tend to look at the fuel consumption gauge, there's a thing that tells you how much fuel you're using etcetera you know. Not just what your fuel level is but what do we call it, the rate meter. And I try to drive in a way that maximises that. [...] I think there's a dialogue between the driver and the car all the time" (Ian).

As the car enables him to think about the MPG, by providing the 'rate' feedback in a dynamic format, Ian performatively responds. Ian too monitors the car in practice, but the MPG is only part of that embodied monitoring. However, in monitoring the car, his body becomes disciplined to it. Engaging with the sensations of movement Ian alludes to how his body expects to 'feel' within a familiar spectrum of movements and sounds as it senses the engine or the tyres, and when there are car problems his awareness of them comes through his bodily engagement with the driver-car-road. Thus 'dialogue' with the car refers to an attentiveness in performance that is accrued through enduring driving practice – practice that incorporates monitoring the MPG to 'maximise' it. However, Ian also highlights how the relationality between car and body can, in practice, blur such that the embodied enaction of driving is 'unconscious', 'second nature', as a learned competency – to borrow Shove and Panzar's (2005) phrase – whereby *embodied* practice is inherently produced through the material car, rather than with it. It is this fundamental entanglement of driver-car-road in practice that needs further unpacking. Ian's harmonisation to the sounds, smells and sensations that the car's motion engenders illustrates how his perceptive body produces experience through his sensual registers of the material car.

7.4.2 'Extension'

The discussion above is concerned with how the car materially shapes subjective embodied performances, emerging as integral to driver-car-road relationality in situated contexts. But what it also alludes to is how the driver-car-road relationality is inherently complex in automotion. Notably, for Ian, the car is not merely a materiality distinguishable in movement from his own body. The performance of automotion blurs his embodied perception such that

producing engagement with the road is inherently mediated through an entanglement of car and body in driving practice. Here I extend this analysis by illustrating through other participants' experience how performatively negotiating the driver-car-road in practice can, for some, nuance the understanding of their own bodies in practice. So to expand on the above, and from earlier on whose body is being negotiated, this section focuses on subjectivities of driver-car relationality whilst in automotion.

Fundamentally, the car comes to be positioned as an 'extension' to the corporeal body. The car itself is understood as a complex amalgamation of materialities; the body of the driver emerging as inherently embedded in those automotive material facets. As Lynne described when talking about her driving career, "*I realised quite early on that it was like just putting another body on. [...] I think it just kinda becomes an extension of yourself*" (Lynne). Lynne understands her driving through an embodied reflection that intrinsically recognises the car's materiality as having the 'steel skin' that Urry (2004) theorised. The material car is appended to Lynne's embodied understanding of her driving practice because she negotiates it within embodied registers. For Lynne, the car is thus positioned as an appendage to herself, akin arguably to the walking sticks of the Nordic walkers Shove and Panzar (2005) note. This does, however, present somewhat of an analytical challenge, since to pursue discussion that tries to unpack the car and the body, in the context of the rural road, would devalue the broader point: that is, the car and the body are inherently entwined.

Subsequently, it emerges that how the car extends the body is contingent both upon the car and the individual performing driving with it. This was acutely captured when, while lamenting the loss of his old Renault Laguna, Mike narrated his driver-car-road relationality through an embodied synergy with his former car;

"I just felt like it was an extension of me. I know I'm quite small but everything was where it should be. If I could design a car I'd put everything where they put it. [...] it was just sort of, it was just the sort of smoothness of interaction it weren't like any effort to drive it and it probably would have been for some people but the shape of the seats and the height from everything was just perfect for me. No effort" (Mike).

Once more, the notion of extension emerges as Mike's articulation of his embodied car performance. Extension, for Mike, is when the performance of driving is celebrated, enjoyed, and 'no effort'; when he can drive the car without being able to draw a distinction between the car and his bodily interaction with it. But this is a form of 'extension' that is materially contingent on him driving his old Laguna. Mike's reference to the design of the car and how it accommodates his body highlights how situated the notion of extension is in practice; a point he later made in discussion about his much taller friend who owned a Laguna but hated it, because it, '*just didn't fit him*' (Mike). Thus producing the car/body

relationship as an ‘extension’ is about the way the car/body comes together in practice as much as when it does not.

How the notion of extension manifests in practice is also illuminating, in terms of unpacking the driver-car-road situated performance. Andrea captures how, for her, the car as an extension to her body is imaginatively conceived through analogous bodily performances:

“The car is an extension. You know if you’re walking down a footpath and it looks icy that you have to walk in a different way to if you are marching on a completely dry path. Or if you’re coming down a hill side that’s rocky, rough, you know you have to watch for jarring your ankles, watch for twisting, watch your steering if you like or what you are doing with your own body to take account of those conditions. It’s exactly the same in a car” (Andrea).

Here Andrea uses the way she experiences her body to narrate how she experiences her car. She anthropomorphises parts of the car with parts of her body. She performatively accommodates nuances in road space while driving but thinks of it as an embodied action. To steer is to navigate the topography, whether on foot or in the car. It is this articulation of embodied driving that illustrates the embeddedness of the practice in pre-cognitive registers. Building on Andrea’s articulation of extension is Ian’s account of his driver-car-road relationality in practice:

“the car and you become a unit, yeah? It isn’t me sitting in a car, it’s me and a car going along this road as a unit, like a bionic person with a robotic arm, you know what I’m saying? That becomes part of this, this unit. My awareness is a biological presence plus a mechanical provenance and that is my awareness, that’s the me, yeah? [...] and it’s now we, this unit are dealing with this piece of road and what our awareness of what’s around us is all about. [...]so you know I’m never fighting the car, once you get used to a car and it’s a good car that you like, I like that car it’s a very good car to drive, and then it’s all muscle memory” (Ian).

Both the way Ian is comprehending his driving through holistic framings such as ‘unit’, but equally using disconnected notions of ‘bionic’, ‘robotic’, ‘biological’ and ‘mechanical’, demonstrate the difficulty in expressing the driver-car-road relationality in practice. What Ian’s quote suggests is that there is a tension between human and mechanical unfolding experientially in practice – akin to that described by Donna Haraway (1993) in her ‘cyborg manifesto’, which, presents ‘a means of imagining new subject positions’ (Thrift, 2000: 147). This data goes beyond labelling the car as an appendage, such as ‘extension’ may imply, and instead emphasises more the inherent relationality between the car and the body as performatively produced and negotiated. Ian reflects on the notion of *awareness*, which he problematises as being human that the car contributes to. Arguably the measures he (and others) read from the car to monitor its response to space while mobile are integral to shaping that awareness that the driver has. Thus the *mechanical provenance* is inseparable in practice. When performances of driving ensue through unfamiliar (or uncomfortable, such as

Mike explained above) then the materiality of the car is more readily noticed. By understanding his driver performance as ‘muscle memory’, Ian highlights how the driver-car-road is produced through his muscles as much as his imaginative and perceptual body. Thus as a practice, driving is endured in embodied registers that position the car as an ‘extension’ of the body.

But the driver-car-road relationality is not to be taken for granted as unproblematically produced. Bodies and cars, as Mike and Ian have suggested above, need to fit or be familiar for the body performing driving. Furthermore, as suggested earlier in the chapter, the car is not a *fait accompli* in terms of what it materially manifests as. In a similar vein then, neither is the body.

Consequently, it is inevitable that the driver-car-road would encompass a myriad of materialities that are entangled in situated tasksapes of driving engagement. This is particularly illustrated through Mike’s admission that when he drives, he only ever wears trainers:

“I always have a light pair of trainers on because I always like to feel the pedals if you know what I mean. I couldn’t drive in these work shoes. I know I could but I wouldn’t like to because I like to sort of feel the car rather than just look down and see how many revs I’ve got on [...] it just gives me a great sense of control I think. Like I said you can look how many revs you’ve got and you can hear engine and you know what’s right and wrong from the sounds and what you can see but you get more from a feeling don’t you?” (Mike)

Thus performing driving, for Mike, entails a performance of wearing trainers to achieve the relationality with the car as his body endures whilst driving. Moreover, the interaction Mike has with his car is multi-sensual: Mike hears, sees and feels the car in practice; augmented by his soft-soled trainers. But by emphasising how he’s selective with his sensory engagement – he sees and hears the car but prefers to ‘feel’ it – Mike highlights how pivotal the body is in subjective practice. He prefers to *monitor* his driving performance through his proprioception over and above what his eyes and ears inform him of. Yet there is a reliance on engaging with the car through practised material relations. Thus the taskscape of practice he phenomenologically produces, following Merleau-Ponty’s (1958) assertion that objects which surround the body are imperative to the body’s orientation to the world, therefore is inherently shaped through the trainers Mike wears on his feet.

However this reading of Merleau-Ponty can be expanded to encompass the broader contribution analysis has presented here. Extension emerges as the embodied articulation of driver-car-road in practice. It is the outcome of these drivers’ bodies sensing and feeling through space through the materiality of the car. The steelwork, leather, plastic, fabric and rubber that collectively augments their bodies is positioned akin to how a walking boot may function with a foot (see, Michael, 2002) or a walking pole with an arm (Shove and Panzar,

2005). The car emerges as an inseparable material negotiation that bodies endure to practice automobility. But in terms of making the taskscape, this data fundamentally presents how the production of rural space through the car is inescapably shaped by the car as an augmentation to the body. It emerges through this discussion how the car itself comes to be positioned as an auxiliary materiality of and to the human body performing driving. To reassert Merleau-Ponty, the body is orientated to the car and in doing so the car is embedded in individuals' subjective renderings of their embodied performances. This empirically illustrates Urry's (2004) key tenet of the driver-car relationality as being the addition of a 'steel skin'; since the data presents the phenomenological bodies of the participants as inherently extended by the material car in driving practice, such that, as is next explored, their driving practices nuance with the materiality of the car.

7.4.3 'Older Cars'

So what has been developed thus far is how the materiality of the car, the materiality of the body, and fundamentally the entanglement of driver-car-road endures as a practice through inherently situated material performances. Here I use the example of 'older car' to unpack how, in practice, this entanglement performatively manifests in the case of a shared material context. Of the participants that the research engaged with, several owned multiple cars, including older cars¹. Focusing on the data specifically referring to driving older cars serves as an example to disentangle several participants' performances that are articulated through specific material biographies (see Appadurai, 1986).

Multiple participants described vehicles that were not modern *per se* as being materially aged and consequently resonant in their subjective performances. Drivers of older cars emphasised the distinctive automotive capacities of their cars, as enabling (Ed) and requiring (Beth) a multisensory engagement of the body to perform driving within them. Beth, who owned a classic red MG convertible, was keen to emphasise that her driver-car-road relationality when driving the MG demanded more bodily engagement for her driving performance: "*You can smell the engine and hear it [...] I can feel when it's wrong [...] you need your senses to work it*" (Beth). Beth suggests she experiences driving the MG performatively through her sensual and sensing body, and thus in practice, as distinct from her everyday Skoda estate car. She implies that whilst driving the MG she is thinking with the car as she is driving, in order to perform driving in that moment. In a critical phenomenological vein, she sets the MG up as sensually distinct because in practice she experiences it in different bodily registers. Her body must orientate (she perceives) to the MG differently to the Skoda she owns.

¹Here this refers to cars not specifically classic (over twenty-five years old), but vehicles that the participants themselves articulated as older.

The bodily response to driving an older car is not just sensory either. The haptic exertion of the body as it engages with the car equally resonates in subjective driving practice. As I noted earlier in the thesis when exploring road shape, for Natalie, driving a vintage campervan was about engaging her whole body in achieving automotion up a hill;

“It’s got a big steering wheel and a big gearstick and it [makes clunking noises] so that’s what it’s like for me, it’s like a workout at the gym. So I’m just thinking about we’re coming up to a hill I better get ready to change down into second, take a deep breath, put my muscles in gear” (Natalie).

In comparison to the sensual body Beth narrates, Natalie’s driver-car-road relationality is much more visceral. Enfolded into her performance is an embodied engagement with the car she is producing her automobility through in practice, but how that car is exerting itself on her body to accommodate undulating topography. This extract from the data acutely captures how the car is the materiality through which space is produced whilst it equally nuances the subjective relationality to the body.

Also, as suggested above, this theme of old cars offers up data on the spatial rendering that is consequence of performing driving an older car. Ed owned, alongside two other more modern family hatchbacks, a Riley, a classic early twentieth-century car. As he recalled about driving his Riley:

“in the older car you feel, you can feel the road, the transmission of the road if you like through the steering wheel is much more, you get that feedback, so and even turning the steering wheel in the bends you know you feel that you’re actually driving the bends and so on, you can feel a resistance in the car to the bend as you turn into the bend, whereas in the modern car as I said before it’s completely effortless you know and you just float along, different thing” (Ed).

In physically experiencing the road as different through the driver-car comprised of the Riley, Ed suggests how pivotal to the production of embodied experience the car materially is. In the earlier section exploring extension, the focus was to illustrate how the car comes to be considered as synonymous in practice with the performance of the body. Here, Ed demonstrates how his driving performance is negotiated through the Riley he drives, and that his spatial experience is different because of it. The road Ed navigates along he understands in a situated way, contingent upon the material car he is driving. Thus, the engagement Ed produces illustrates how contingent the driver-car-road relationality is in the performance of the ride.

What emerges through unravelling the data on older cars is how the car as a material entity serves to augment the body, shaping the perceptual framing the subject can produce of the world. Yet in the body orientating to it – the car being reproduced as an extension of the subject – the empirical data substantiates Merleau-Ponty’s theoretical notion: the body as an entity is always to be materially situated (Merleau-Ponty, 1967). It is from here that the

chapter's penultimate section explicitly attends to how the rural ride manifests in practice.

7.5 Practising Rural Rides

Here the focus turns to drawing out where, and critically how, notions of rurality are negotiated in subjective practices. Through the concept of 'ride', the chapter has sought to disentangle the driver-car-road relationality by initially destabilising what can be understood as car *per se*, followed by unravelling how the body is subjectively experienced in driving performances. In the analysis presented thus far in the chapter, the role of the rural has not been explicit within the subjective performances discussed. However, here is where the thesis begins to unpack the spatial dimensions of the driver-car-road performance, and to subsequently question how the subjective production of rural space manifests through these encounters.

In the subsequent discussion, a dialectic emerges: data suggests that the driver-car-road relationality produces a ride that is both *in* and *of* a performance of rural space. To unfold this contention, the initial section attends to how the subject positions producing rural space as *of* the ride. In this sense, rural space is emergent from the driver-car-road relationality. This theme has been the focus, though not explicitly, of the thesis' discussion thus far overall: rural space shapes but is shaped by subjective renderings of it as conceptually produced space. The latter section draws on data that suggests the ride of the driver-car-road to be *in* rural space and therefore rural space as produced distinct from the car. This critical vein presents performances of driving in rural space as epistemologically reliant on rurality being a geographical and conceptual entity disconnected from the subject. In short, this data presents a key challenge to analytically disentangle, since the thesis sets out to explore how this is theoretically untenable in a Schatzkian Practice Theory and Merleau-Pontean phenomenological framing of the subject. Moreover, this leaves questions for how performing rural space through Halfacree's three-fold triad manifests also.

7.5.1 Ride: Of Rural Space

The notion of *ride* emerges from theorising how subjective performances of driving are physically endured along rural roads that have undulating, riveted, topographically challenging surfaces, shapes and surrounds. The scope that the driver-car-road relationality emerges as produced through renderings of rural space illustrates how some productions of rural space intrinsically draw on romanticised notions of rurality. Moreover these notions of rurality are incorporated into subjective, embodied performances. As the data below demonstrates, when the road is conceived as *rural* within the driver-car-road paradigm, then experience, for some, is rendered as nuanced through rurality *per se*.

Before fleshing out the example, I want to emphasise that the notion of rurality as

nuancing the driver-car-road engagement in embodied registers was a perception suggested by multiple participants. The drive, for many, was a ride inherently emergent from an already-established imaginary of what constitutes rurality *per se* – such that it is notionally inescapable as Cloke (2003b) emphasises – whereby to use the car in rural space was to produce that drive as emergent from rurality *per se*. For example, for Mike, driving in rural space was sensed through ‘that smoothness’; the ride he endures centralises driving as inherently *of* rural space.

Neil, is a young (late-twenties) driver. He uses his Dad’s car to go to the Peak District with his girlfriend. He readily acknowledges that he aspires to drive a ‘sportier car’. When he talked of the driving he did in rural space, his reflections relied upon a positioning of rurality as inherently defining the drive (his *ride*) in tactile, haptic and embodied registers. Performance produces the sensations of the drive as geographically contingent on the *rural* locale, yet the determination of space as rural is rendered as haptically sensed:

“you kind of get a report back through the movement of the seat or the movement of the, you can feel the steering pushing back against you or when you do something into your hands and things so there is that kind of tactile, the actual, probably contingent on where you are” (Neil).

Akin to the analysis in the previous section, the automotion is understood through an embodied comprehension of the driver-car-road relationality. However, when Neil is talking about his performance he is subjectively defining this as produced through rural space. Arguably the reflection could be about a performance endured in any geographical locale. But Neil was relishing talking about the driver-car-road ride he can achieve in space that he produces as being rural. His tactile performances in practice are thus positioned as emergent from the spatial context being *rural space*.

Thus rurality is adopted as a medium through which the embodied endurance is mitigated; a bumpy road is positively experienced, as Mike suggested, ‘*in a car out there I like that ... you put a positive spin on it don’t you?*’ It is this embodied embracing of the rural road that is critically illustrative of the power rural notions hold in shaping situated practices. To return to Neil, in this extract he is recalling driving through roads with thickly wooded tree *surrounds* (see previous ‘Road’ chapter), and using this experience to further embellish the data with notions of performative, embodied rurality in practice:

“you’re rapidly going from light to darkness all the time so your eyes have to adjust. It’s yeah you know you merge with the car a bit more than when you do when you’re just driving on a typical straight road. You actually have to employ your driving skills [...] you’re using your whole body and yeah, yeah use your whole body to drive the car and not just sit there and cruise. It’s more interesting, more challenging” (Neil).

Neil understands rural space through nuances in his driving performance, that he comprehends as spatially contingent. Moreover, that space is rural space. He drives roads

that deliver rural space as he understands it: that is a rural road *per se* as challenging the driver performance. His account of performance is reminiscent of notions of the open road or the perfect bend that circulate in popular media, television and advertising for cars, whilst also share similar imagery with traditional representations of rural space as idyllic (see thesis introduction). He puts to work the notions of driver performance culturally sought and uses them to comprehend his driver performance. The outcome is that Neil's ride positions the challenges to his body as experientially integral to his understanding of what rural space can deliver. In short, this driver performance is inherently shaped by and emergent from successive notions of rurality as a space for driving, but more fundamentally, as a space produced through the body too.

7.5.2 Ride: In Rural Space

Yet the car in some performative registers is deeply problematic in the experience of the rural it offers. Discussion thus far has been propagating the salient argument that driving, and critically rural driving, has an integral embodied dimension that shapes the material and performative dimensions of practice. But here I present data to temper this argument, with data that dialectically posits experiencing rurality as inherently external from the body. The car, as an embodied endeavour, is refuted as a materiality of practice that sits in tension with producing rural space. It is through noting these key extracts that the chapter draws to a close with the assertion that rurality – as dominant discourses which emphasise rurality as idyllic, natural and un-peopled – holds enduring power in subjective performances of rural driving practice. Consequently, rather than rural space positioned as subjectively produced through (rural) driving, in these performances of driving, rural comes to be reified.

One way in which this reification manifests is through metaphors of detachment. In distinction from the discussion above, these data situate performing rurality as a practice disconnected from the car. Rather than the rural being understood as produced through the driver-car-road relationality, these respondents attempt to maintain that driving and experiencing rurality are ontologically distinct. Here the car is conceived as causing a loss of sensory engagement; engagement which validates the purpose of engaging with the countryside for Daniel:

"It's a very kind of unreal world inside a car I think [...] when you cycle through the countryside for example you're kind of part of it, you're in it, you can smell it, you can hear it, you can taste it when it's wet you know. You're kind of really immersed in it. In a car it's like watching television almost. You're looking through glass, you can't hear the sounds, you know it's very isolated" (Daniel).

Critically, Daniel is keen to emphasise that his driver-car-road performance is distinct from how he conceives experiencing rural space. The materiality of the car is conceived as

problematic for engaging with rural space. His reflection sets rurality up as a multisensory entity, but in arguing that the car detaches him from producing rural engagement, he reifies what rural space is *per se*. Yet, as the thesis much more broadly presents, such reification of rurality is a false dichotomy between rural and non-rural space. As I have continued to reinforce, rurality is subjectively defined. By exhibiting a reliance on notions of rurality that chime with dominant discourses of the rural as idyllic, Daniel merely serves to reinforce those discursive notions performatively.

In a similar vein, Lisa's description of driving performance in rural space sets up the automotive ride as in an external rurality. Thus the rural, for Lisa, is not experienced through the car:

"I think the only thing that occurs to me whenever we're driving, or driving with somebody in the countryside, is how, how distanced you are from the actual experience of being out in the country when you're inside a car [...] I think it strikes you when you're in a car that you're a little bit cocooned from what's going on outside [...] when you're in a car and you've got your safety belt on and you've got a metal box around you you're actually quite safe and secure [...] I think people go in their cars and they think that they're out in the country but you're not really because you're in your own little bubble" (Lisa).

What initially strikes as a key insight from Lisa's description is how cars are considered as interior spaces that subsequently mean rurality is conceived as unrelated to them. For Lisa, rurality is set up as a space that is anterior to the car. It is a space that is 'out' and 'outside' such that to drive is to be prohibited from engaging with the rural, as Lisa conceives it; rurality is engaged with outside of the car. But again, like Daniel's data above, Lisa is utilising notions of dominant discourse on what rural is *per se*, and using this to problematise the car's role within the production of rural engagement. She refers to the car as 'distancing' her from what she conceives rurality to be. In this account of practice the production of rurality is still embedded in the taskscape Lisa produces, since she determines what and where rural space is that she performatively endures. Thus, a similar reflection emerges as above, in that the dominant discourse of rurality as an entity endures in imaginaries of practice with the resulting consequence being that the car is denounced in the production of rural space, despite the enduring relational navigation of driver-car-road.

Finally, in this last example, how rural is negotiated in practice emerges as subjectively selective; again positioning driving practice as *in* a rural space that is anterior to the car. Nicky, a museum practitioner from Buxton, recognises a disconnection between how she subjectively negotiates driving in rural space as a driver-car-road production, with the values that shape her understanding of rural *per se*:

"there's something I find quite strange, and I noticed this as soon as I heard what your research was about, I think there's something quite Romantic with a capital R about my connection with the countryside, and sort of being

there, getting back to nature, being very primal, natural, all that sort of stuff, all that very English stuff. And so contact is really important, and I do see the car as actually prevent, you know, creating an artificial environment, a little bubble that goes through the countryside, that makes us observers rather than part of it. [later ...] you know air-conditioning and all that is great but it ain't an experience, it's an experience of being in the car. You know you can't hear birds because you're surrounded by engine noise, insulated from all sound, you can't feel the weather, you don't feel any textures apart from the texture of the car, you now, as a sensual experience, it's a car! It just feels the same if you're in the middle of Manchester or on the edge of Monsall Dale you know that's, it's still the car" (Nicky).

Nicky recalls her driver performance through an embodied perception of practice. A key concept for Nicky is that of air conditioning in relation to the rural imaginaries she maintains. Performing driving through an air conditioned car sits uncomfortably for Nicky with the multisensory rendering of rural space she describes. Nicky comprehends the rural as an entity to be corporally engaged with; rural space is heard through birds, sensed by engaging with weather and felt through tactility of various textures that the car is conceived to inhibit. Consequently, Nicky positions rurality as exterior from her driver-car-road relationality because she produces rural space as disconnected from the car.

However, arguably there is also a more explicit referencing from Nicky of the dominant discourses of rurality, coupled with a celebration of what they entail. Nicky describes a relationality to rural space that posits it as 'nature', 'primal, natural' and 'English'. It is these values of rurality that are performatively inhibiting her from conceiving of the car as integral to rural space *per se*. Moreover, she is referencing the dominant discourses of an idyllic *English* rural that is intrinsically un-automotive. By relying on such values to shape her enduring perceptive production of rural space, Nicky ultimately performs the dominant discourses and contributes to their enduring cultural normativity.

Nicky, Daniel and Lisa produced the rural through dominant discourses that serve to reify it as an entity to entangle oneself amongst. This sets rural space up as ontologically distinct in subjective performances. Yet this is arguably an implausible ontology of the subject, since, following Merleau-Ponty (1958), the subjective is always orientated to the objects which surround it.

Moreover, Nicky's reflection, that air conditioning creates an artificial environment within the space being driven through, is an analogous finding to Waitt and Lane's (2007) work on touring in the Australian Kimberley National Park. Similar to Nicky's sentiment here, Waitt and Lane argue that the environment produced within a car is not anterior spatial production, but rather it shapes the way in which that exterior space is understood. Thus Nicky problematises her driver-car-road relationality as being *in* rural space as ontologically detached from her perceptive, performative driving body producing rural (akin to the data

above). Furthermore, this is a position that this thesis argues is ontologically untenable and has worked hard to debunk.

To sum up, the aim of these discussion sections has been to present the key complexities that emerge from the driver-car-road performative negotiation in rural space. What transpires from the data are two dialectical positions: rural space is conceived as inherently embedded within and thus *of* driving practice, and that rural space is produced as anterior from the driver-car-road, such that it is an entity that one can be *in*, whether driving or otherwise. The former insight illustrates a rurality that is inherently powerful and performative in practice. For Neil and Mike, the rural space that they endure in situated performance is experienced as integral to driving practice; the driver-car-road relationality emergent through, thus *of*, a situated production of rural space in practice.

7.6 Ending the Ride

This chapter began with a broad ambition: to establish the relationality in performances navigating the car, the road and the body in practice, and to situate the production of rural space within that negotiation. Using the concept of ride, the chapter's trajectory has been composed through developing analyses firstly around the notion of materiality, secondly around the performative enacting of the driver-car-road, and finally placing the performative in a rural spatial context.

Initially, the ride emerges as shaped by what the car is materially composed from. The scattering of shoes, the screwed up waterproofs stuffed in a carrier bag and the spare set of something stowed in the boot come to have powerful resonances. As I have demonstrated through the analysis, not only do these material effects have critical purchase for people in their conceptualisation of the ride (since they might not be put to practical use), but they in turn augment the driver-car-road in practice. Stuff serves as a means to mediate the driver-car-road relationality, to nuance this depending on time of year, destination or other occupants of the car, and to mitigate against moments of immobility.

Moreover, stuff fundamentally emerges as exemplifying the relationship to an (imagined) body-in-countryside. Cars become populated with other things because bodies of other car occupants can shape the driver's perception of what stuff is required too. But critically, it emerges how pivotal the body is in reflecting on the materialities to mitigate immobility. Cars extend the subjective geographies far beyond what can physically be achieved meaning should the car fail, further material preparations for the body are anticipated to be needed. Furthermore, the stuff that does accumulate, from negotiating the various body imaginaries that emerge, illustrates a rendering of the subjective body through imaginaries of rural space that rely on established cultural norms of the rural as idyllic.

So car is subsequently understood as a processual, situated materiality in practice,

subjectively renegotiated across various social times and spaces. Car is not merely the material it is comprised of, rather it is subjectively made and re-made in practice, according to spatial imaginaries and experiences of performatively producing rural.

The chapter then turned to consider the performances of driver-car-road relationality whilst in automotion. Using ride, the analysis focused on the movement in practice, the bodies of those engaged in driving and how the embodied sensibilities manifest in relation to the car. The key contribution from this analysis was how subjectively interwoven the performance of driving is, with the body of the driver disciplined to the materiality of the car; drawing on Foucault (1975). It transpires that cars engender situated performances of driving and shape how driving practices accrue in subjective performance; illustrated through analysis of driving to maximise the MPG measure, for example.

In the final analytical discussion, I open up the question of how does the production of rural space shape the driver-car-road in practice. The findings here emerge as a dialectic of rural production: that rural space is produced through and of a being in rurality for the driver-car-road, against rural space being anterior to the driver-car-road in practice. Although the latter half of this discussion deals with the dialectical positioning of rurality to the trajectory the thesis has been establishing, it does this to reinforce the argument that rurality is subjectively produced, with situated negotiations of discursive rurality shaping practice. However, in highlighting that such ontologies endure, the conclusion to draw from this is how performances that render rurality as distinct space from the body serve to reinforce and reify the rural *per se*. Arguably therefore, these participants' performances that objectify rurality, as distinct from the subject positionality they occupy, serve simply as practice of dominant rural discourses. These individuals still produce, perform and endure rural space subjectively, through their own situated and fundamentally interior car spaces to be able to reify the externality as rural *per se*.

Finally, the thesis has progressed in this chapter to disentangle the key embodied, material and conceptual dimensions of driving practice in rural space through the concept of ride. The resulting contributions developed are three-fold: that the car is a materiality that is inherently unstable, subjectively orchestrated in practice; that bodies shape material relations with the car and of its enaction; and that rural space is ontologically dialectical. Moreover, it is the latter that demands further critical attention. The findings that challenge production of rural space as through situated performances are important to further unpack, since the thesis' theoretical framework sets up to challenge any distinction between the body and the materialities it encounters in practice. Fortunately, the following and final chapter to the thesis offers much scope to examine ontologies of the rural.

• 8 •

RURAL

8.1 Locating Rural

When this thesis set out, it opened with a reflection on rural driving that encapsulates the tensions at play with cars and the British countryside. I began by establishing the cultural normativity of British countryside being rendered as ‘the rural’ – drawing on literatures from Halfacree (1993; 1994; 1995; 2003; 2006) and Cloke (1994; 2000; 2003*b*) – progressing onto illustrating the intimate, yet culturally fractious, relationship cars have to ‘the rural’. The opening chapters worked hard to establish what the questions about the rural are, and work harder, arguably, to substantiate why it is worthwhile asking them.

Fundamentally, what emerges is that people perform rural space through social practices of everyday life; such that they actively engage with the heterogeneity of rurality in order to make sense of the encounters with the countryside that they have. Across the discussion of the empirical data are repeated moments of performativity – as understood through Gregson and Rose (2000) – whereby actions in the countryside are both shaped by rural discourse, whilst in turn defining what it means and how it is empowered in that moment. Moreover, where the car comes into that is key. What the car enables is power to individuals to engage with their own ‘rural’ imaginaries at a pace, place and frequency of their choosing. As such, reproducing ‘the rural’ emerges as far from homogenously performed, but as a negotiated in practice whereby individuals are active agents conceiving the countryside within which they dwell through their own subjective position. For some this involves the car, for others the car is actively excluded. For some, engaging with the rural drive is to enable a destination to be reached, confining their relationship with their car to a means of transport to get from (their) a to (their rurally located) b. On the other hand, for some individuals the rural drive is an event in itself, and a moment in time and space that comes to matter in varying degrees and through diverse registers.

It is through foregrounding the sentient subject that the concern for how rurality is negotiated in practice has animated the thesis throughout. But, and the thesis reflects this in its discussion, how much attention can be paid to the production of rural *per se* is situated, contingent and inherently in flux. Locating the rural emerges as inherently about contextualising rurality through the subjective scale. The means in which to achieve this, is enabled, the thesis has argued, through marrying together Schatzkian Practice Theory and an Ingoldian phenomenology of the body. Such conceptual framing is innovative in the

geographical discipline, but rather than being an imperative for originality, I am keen to emphasise that this marrying of concepts is wholly emergent from connecting together how rurality can be theorised through Halfacree's (2006) triad. The triad formed the basis of positioning rural as theoretically performable, and emergent through practice. Moreover, through unravelling the data on rural performances it has been demonstrated the purchase of thinking the rural as produced in practice – a point I flesh out more comprehensively below when I present a nuanced rendering of the triad,.

So here, in this final chapter, I draw together the discussions that have ensued since articulating those initial concerns for the relational production of rural space through the car. Broadly, the chapter is in two halves: the first attends to consolidation of what has already been set out in the earlier chapters, with the latter contending the key conclusions, critically engaging with how they emerge. In the first section, I summarise each of the substantive chapters' contributions. Road, Rhythm, Re/View and Ride are each concluded with the objective of making explicit their contribution to the broader thesis; furthering the conclusions offered in each chapter's summation. This enables the discussion to tease out how each theme develops understanding of the way that rural spaces are subjectively produced, whilst noting how they socially cohere.

The second half of the chapter returns to addressing the key concerns initially set out through the research questions, then consolidates the findings in terms of their theoretical purchase and holistic contribution. To do this, I firstly reassert some of the foundational tenets established in the Read/Reworked chapter, focusing on recalling the key dimensions of Halfacree's (2006) triad of rural space. From there, I reassemble the salient points from understanding social life through Schatzkian Theories of Practice (Schatzki, 1996; 2001; 2002). The purpose of this discussion is to work through the Schatzkian rendering of practice to set out the composite parts of a social practice. These initial discussions feed into the principal purpose of this chapter; delineating the fundamental contribution the thesis makes in positioning rural space as (re)produced through the performance of social practices. I explore how rural space can be understood as socially practised, presenting through diagrams to illustrate how my thesis conceptually culminates, but tempering this conclusion with reflexivity in discussion. The chapter closes with a comprehensive summary of the key conclusions and contribution that is made. I reflect back over the thesis produced to reflexively reflect on the role of the car as an empirical lens in the research, especially in the context of the conclusions being reached. Lastly, from summarising the broader thesis, I note how the objectives that were initially set up have been navigated, before looking on ahead at the potential for future research scope to be borne out of this work.

8.2 Contributions

In order to establish how the thesis has addressed the research questions, and in what way they have been addressed, it is useful to collect together the contribution each substantive chapter makes to the thesis. The trajectory of the thesis has cumulatively developed: through a concern for the space of rural driving in *Road*; to an engagement with the temporalities of performance in *Rhythm*; in *Re/View*'s focus on visibility in rural contexts; to unpacking how the driver-car-road negotiation relationally manifests in driving practices, and critically when those subjective performances play out in rural space. In each chapter I re-frame the geographic scale of interest; from the road as the space of performance, to the social and temporal scales that animate performances, to the performative, visualising body, then onto unravelling the sensuous and sensual body in performances of (rural) driving. Within each chapter, summations of the discussion are offered, however the purpose here is to further articulate the contribution each chapter makes by attending specifically to what the chapter delivers as an empirical insight to the production of rural space. To do that, for each of the chapters, I firstly detail the conclusions drawn, before giving space to consideration of the broader contribution each makes. The chapters are discussed below in the order that they appear in the thesis, reinforcing and embellishing the thesis trajectory through their discussion.

8.2.1 *Road*

Firstly, in *Road*, the opening chapter of empirical analysis, I explore the key finding that, when thinking about countryside driving as a performance of rural engagement, the road space emerges as a critical site to unpack. Unravelling the road as it shapes driving practices in the countryside illustrates the importance of the geographical and material dimensions that resonate in subjective performances. By attending to the material space of the road through the themes of surrounds, shape and surface, the findings have shown how roads are fundamental within the performance of (rural) driving.

In drawing on Ingold's work, Edensor (2007) illustrates the value in theorising the road as produced, relational and constructed, demonstrating how landscape phenomenology provides a means to theorise a performative road space. Such an approach highlights the value of focusing at the individual scale too. Thus the thesis' substantive discussion of the data began with reference back to the foundational concepts set out in the initial *Read/Reworked* chapter. Ingold's (1993; 2001) notion of 'taskscape' is established empirically in this chapter: discussion emphasises the embodied negotiation of the road, such that as the individual encounters space, they are simultaneously navigating their sensibilities, histories and temporality to produce their understanding of landscape, through their own situatedness.

Specifically, *surrounds* is first introduced to refer to the immediate environ that encompasses the ‘tubular’ (Ingold, 2007a) road space. Wherever roads are located they’re bounded by their ‘public’ space. Within this corridor, the land and sky in immediate view from the car can all be considered as integral assets to the road; producing what the road is as subjectively relational in performance. But from recognising the import of road as more-than-linear (drawing on Ingold’s (2007a) Lines thesis) this enables the thesis to establish its initial key point: it is the surrounds of the road that define subjective performances as negotiating rural space *per se*. Moreover, surrounds also function as a material medium that disciplines (in a Foucauldian sense) driver performances through controlling architectures of signs and signals.

But then this finding is replicated through attention to the other dimensions that are identified of the road; *shape*, *surface* and ultimately, *sharing*. It is through unpacking the road as performatively multidimensional in driving practice that it emerges as imperative to conceiving space as rural *per se*. Rural roads emerge as materially and performatively produced, with participants articulating roads’ cultural normativity as being in tension with rural space *per se*. Therefore the chapter presents the first empirical insight into how tensions that theoretically populate rural space empirically manifest in practice. For example, the theme of sharing highlights how the surrounds, shape and surface are relationally negotiated as integral to a rendering of rural space that, when it comes to socially sharing the road with other occupants, is problematic because the space is conceived as rural.

Consequently, the road, I argue, must be conceived as productive of rural space: the myriad, interconnected dimensions that compose the road emerge as embedded in performance. The way that this chapter achieves emphasis on the import of the road is to adapt Dant’s (2004) notion of the ‘driver-car’ as a negotiation of car-body in situated practice, to *driver-car-road*. Therefore, throughout the thesis, the paradigm of *driver-car-road* is repeatedly employed to capture its inherent relationality in practice. The chapter serves as a foundation upon which the thesis builds, as from establishing the material space of the road as integral to the embodiment and imaginaries of producing rural space through the drive, the road as a spatial medium endures as a material facet of practice.

8.2.2 Rhythm

To establish that rural driving practices can be conceived as rhythms, the first endeavour this chapter undertakes is to reconcile Ingold and Schatzki’s respective notions of time. I therefore begin with recognition of the inherent temporality that Ingold emphasises animates individuals’ taskscapes such that the taskscape navigates past, present and future times woven through the moment it is articulated. The chapter recognises that this form of thinking time as temporality sidelines objective renderings of time. I similarly draw on Schatzki’s

notion of ‘timespace’, which also serves to destabilise any reliance on unpacking practices through objective conceptualisations of time. Rather, Schatzki emphasises how time is inherently ‘dimensional’ throughout social practices, such that Shove characterises practices as composed through ‘temporal textures’ that accrue multi-scaled temporalities through subjective performances. This theoretical backdrop, I argue, provides conceptual ground for conceiving performances that socially cohere as practice (such as driving) as negotiating rhythms. Drawing on recently published work in geography (see, Edensor, 2010), the chapter cultivates an understanding of the multiplicity with which time is embedded in rural driving practice as rhythmically animated. Three rhythms are presented: seasonal rhythms, weekly or circadian rhythms and aural rhythms. From discussion of these empirical themes, the chapter makes two interrelated contributions to understanding how rural space is subjectively manifest in practice.

The first of these is how rhythms reference dominant rural discourses of rural space as idyllic; particularly in terms of seasonal rhythms. It is useful here to refer back to the development of Halfacree’s (2006) three-fold architecture of rural space reworked at the beginning of the thesis. Originally Halfacree’s triad had ‘representations of rurality’ as a pivotal vertex to the configuration of rural space, which to an extent was relegating this by emphasising the import of lived and material ruralities to the production not of ‘the rural’, but rural space. However, ‘the rural’ still emerges as imperative in productions of rural space, and in the discussion of seasonal rhythms, seasons serve as a trope for connection to ‘the rural’. Consequently, the production of rural space is shaped by these sentiments of ‘the rural’. Yet the rural that is being performed through seasonal rhythms is animated; meaning the production of rural space through the triad is itself dynamic as ‘the rural’ dimension is not performed as static in practice. Seasonal rhythms emerge as embedded in rural driving practice which serves to emphasise how notions that can be attributed to discourses of ‘the rural’ are reinforced through situated performances.

So subsequently the principal outcome from this chapter is the animation which rhythmanalysis approaches engender, and what this means for understanding rural space. As drives are produced in and through rurality, the rhythms that they negotiate can similarly be understood as rhythmically animating the situated production of rural space. Rural space, when understood as shaped by the performative rhythms of rural driving, comes alive. If rural driving practices cohere as shaped by temporalities, or timespaces, that are far from objective, then rural space is being produced (to define the performance as *rural* driving), rendering that production through this ‘dimensionality’. Rural space must therefore be understood as dynamic not just in its situated production that situates the subject as performing through notions of rural space, but more intricately: rural space must be understood as temporally multidimensional in its subjective production such that rural space

is rendered as having a ‘temporal texture’ (Shove, 2009) emergent from the associated practices it is generated through.

Consequently, *Rhythm* brings to the fore the production of an animate, dynamic and multifaceted rural space in practice. This makes a pivotal contribution to the overall thesis, since it enables conceptualising rural space as temporally heterogeneous and thus enduringly in-progress. Addressing temporality through the framing of rhythm illustrates how rural space is inherently contingent since the practices that here have provided a lens onto its production (driving and passengering) emphasise the importance of thinking the dimensions of practice as processual. This has been captured in the thesis’ triad (presented below) through adopting performative verbs as the vertices.

8.2.3 *Re/View*

When the thesis reaches *Re/View*, the trajectory of unravelling the embodied dimensions of performances that negotiate (discursively dominant notions of) rurality in practice has been established. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an account of how embodied performance can be reconciled with a focus on visibility in practice. To do this I draw on Sobchack’s (1992) work on the phenomenology of film perception to assert the importance of thinking visibility as embodied performance. This has much purchase, I argue, for conceiving of rural space too, since what it purports is a means to address how the primacy of visibility that shapes ‘the rural’ is performatively manifest. Through the chapter structure, that proposes three interconnected concepts of visible, visual and envisioning, much is learned about how rural driving practices engender production of rural space with a primacy of visual registers; owing to the import of seeing and looking in driving performances *per se*.

The key contribution this chapter makes is to emphasise how myriad framings of visibility are enmeshed in performances of rural space. Discussion of the visible initiates the empirical reflections presented, illustrating how visibilities of car use are learned competences of driving practice. The intent for this section is to highlight how, when thinking about the production of rural space through the car, it is imperative to recognise the role of the car in shaping what is visible – both materially and in subjective engagements with the car in driving practices. I emphasise that the car engenders driving practice with practised visibilities: the rear-view and wing mirrors, the windows and the windscreen, for example, are ways in which what is made visible in practice is shaped by the materiality of the car being driven. Moreover, I note how visibilities are inherently embodied in their production and selectively manifest in practice.

Thus, what is visible is also emphasised as being situated and contingent; visibility is only ever rendered through (embodied) vision. Therefore, visibilities of rural space are not pre-given, rather to produce rural space is to always be rendering what is visible through

notions of the visual. This means that whilst the chapter presents the possibility of discrete framings of visible and visual, in empirical discussion it becomes clear how the visual is always a foreshadowing for what is made visible by the subject in practice. Consequently, discussion of visual, and visualising specifically in the rural drive, illustrates how the conceptual rendering of practice is omnipresent in the negotiation of producing rural space. I draw on Sobchack's (1992) idea of 'volitional' seeing to capture how the visualising in rural driving practice intentionally opts into incorporating and interpreting what is visible subjectively.

In the context of rural space, what is visible emerges as rendered through what is inherently visual. I explore this tension between the visible and visualising in practice, concluding that a paradox emerges, whereby to produce *rural* driving necessitates recognising that what composes the visible is being understood through negotiations of the visual. To visualise is to render what is seen through a conceptual framing that shapes and selectively appropriates the landscape in the production of the subjective taskscape. The interplay between visibility and visualising in practice is subjectively nuanced and inherently situated, such that visualising rural space rendered selective visibilities imperative to understandings of rural driving practice.

However, through discussion of envisioning, the chapter presents data which captures the inherent temporality to performances of visualising in subjective taskscapes. By drawing on Ingold's taskscape notion as being inherently bound by the temporalities it is rendered through, the chapter presents the key theme of envisioning. Envisioning illustrates how anticipated visualities are made performative in driving practice. Instances that have occurred in disconnected times and spaces are brought to the fore in visual registers in the moments of rural driving practice, in subjectively contingent ways. Envisioning illustrates that the taskscape is visually myriad not just through the various visibilities with which it is produced, but through the embodied interaction individuals have with a foreshadowing of seeing that becomes embedded in practice. Thus envisioning demonstrates how enfolded into the taskscapes of rural driving performances are temporalities of rural engagement that have embodied resonance in practice. Moreover, this illustrates how there is a dynamism, temporally and geographically, in how rural space is visually conceived in practice.

But the separation which the chapter denotes, through the themes of visible, visualising and envisioning, is maintained as merely an analytical approach to the data. By focusing on the subjective productions of a distinct space in the Peak District (Surprise View), it emerges how rural space is produced by multiple subjectivities that cohere socially and geographically in the performance of rural space. In the interplay described between the car and the topography (or *shape* of the road), Surprise View serves as a case study that captures the collective production of a rural space with a primacy of the visual realm. To

produce surprise as rural space *per se* necessitates individuals drawing on received notions of rurality, and articulating these performatively.

Finally, the salient contribution this chapter makes is to emphasise the import driving practices have in the production of rural space in the space-time of situated performances. Yet, although *Re/View* reinforces rural space as a visual endeavour in practice, this conclusion needs to be tempered with critical recognition that the empirical lens of driving, which was used to explore the production of rural space, is an inherently visual practice. Consequently, the findings suggesting the imperative role of an embodied visuality to productions of rural space need to be contextualised as being emergent from driving practices. Still, visuality – whether in the form of making visible, visualising with conceptual rendering of what is seen, or envisioning and enfolding temporalities into the taskscape – emerges as pivotal in the production of rural space. But it is the embeddedness of temporality in the engagement with the integral visualities that sets the chapter's contribution apart from other works that emphasise the role of the visual in conceptualising rurality (for example, Abram, 2003). Visualities are shown as situated and in-progress, rather than fixed and static in individuals' engagements that perform rural driving.

Yet, the productions of rural space discussed encompass a primacy of visual engagement, owing, to greater and lesser extents (but illustrated in the example of Surprise View), to the discursive notions of 'the rural' that purport British countryside vis-à-vis rural space. However, this is subjectively deployed in various time-spaces, illustrating how the discursive, or imaginative dimensions that shape meaning of British rural space are, in practice, subjectively negotiated. This latter conclusion feeds into the production of the thesis' triad below, since it provides the basis for arguing that the dimensions of rural space are unevenly evoked in situated practices. This uneven engagement with the triad that produces rural space is then further taken up and developed in the following *Ride* chapter.

8.2.4 *Ride*

Throughout the thesis until this point, there had been a push towards teasing out the embodied dimensions of producing rural engagement, but in *Ride* much more space is given to unpacking how the driver-car-road relationality manifests in subjective practice. To address the production of rural space from this angle, the chapter largely focuses on the driver-car-road relationality in driving practice, identifying where notions of rurality were shaping the negotiations of driving practice. Three substantive conclusions can be delineated from how this discussion contributes to unravelling the production of rural space.

Initially what emerged were key reflections on the instability of the car materiality in practice; such that the car is nuanced by the perception of rural spaces that participants had in loading it with myriad materialities. From reflecting on the materialities incorporated

into the car that engender rural drives, it emerges how the bodily scale is used as a framing for how rural space needs to be prepared for. Cars hold walking boots and waterproofs, foods and drinks: rural space is framed for engagement through the various bodies that are anticipated to frequent the car; the driver, the children or the dog, for example.

Secondly, discussion of the intimate relationality individuals had with their car was illustrative of the complex of material relations in practice. By focusing on how driving practices manifest, the disciplining –drawing on Foucault (1975)– of the driver subject came to the fore. This was pivotal in understanding how the rural spatial context was performatively manifest in driving practices. Through a case study reflection on ‘old car’ data, it became clear how performative dimensions of driving practice owe much to the car being driven. Whilst the chapter doesn’t explicitly address notions of rural space in analysing driver-car relationality, what this does serve to do is provide a conceptual and empirical basis from which the chapter can unpack the nuances of car-body-rural road practice.

Consequently, *Ride* presents the thesis with two ontologies of rural space production. A dialectic of rural space ontologies emerges, that, following discussion of each, I then subsequently work to destabilise. On the one hand, rural space can be understood as produced through and therefore emergent of the driver-car-road negotiation. This positioning denotes rural space as inherently situated, partial and its production as contingent upon the subjective driver-car-road relationality engaging with notions of rurality in practice. In drawing out from the data how embodied relations to rural space subjectively endure, the thesis begins to position rural space as practiced; reinforced by the recognition embodied registers are given in these practices of rural space.

But *Ride* also presents an antithetical ontology of rural space, reflected in several examples from the data. This ontology positions the production of rural space as anterior to the driver-car-road negotiation. Rural space is thus understood as a fixed entity; an objective reality that can be navigated *in*. This is a somewhat challenging finding for the thesis to navigate, since it could negate some of the theoretical underpinning established in the Read/Rework framing, by suggesting a materially objective rurality endures through practices. Yet, in concluding the analysis within *Ride*, and here, the data that produces rurality as ontologically distinct from the subject notably exemplifies how performances endure as shaped by dominant discourses on ‘the rural’; the effect being to problematise the car. This can be understood by the refuting of the car’s role within their production of rural space. But, in these ontologies of rural engagement, materially denying the car’s role within the relationality does not circumvent an embodied production of rurality, since to objectify rural space still necessitates perceiving and producing it from somewhere, to follow Merleau-Ponty (1958). Rather rural space emerges as ontologically bound to the driver-car-

road negotiation in driving practices: to externalise rural space necessitates subjective perception of the car as anterior to engagement, when ontologically this distinction is unattainable. That some individuals maintain an objectification of rurality on the one hand opens up conceptual space to, potentially, destabilise the thesis' trajectory to explore rural space as produced in and through practice. And, in presenting an antithetical position on the production of rural space through the driver-car-road, this serves to remind how inherently partial the production of rural space is. But on the other hand, there is still a production of rural space; empowering the discursive dimension over and above the phenomenological and material facets that are integral to practice. Thus, rural space can continue to be conceived as produced, but its production is contingent on the extent the subject embeds themselves and their materiality (the car) within it. I offer further development and conceptual explanation below.

These key conclusions are taken up and developed, along with those noted above, in the next section.

8.3 Reworking Rural Space through Schatzkian Practice Ontologies

I begin this culminating discussion of the thesis by returning to my starting point of Halfacree's (2006) three-fold architecture of rural space. By recapping briefly on the critical steps taken to develop Halfacree's (*ibid.*) triad, I turn to detailing Schatzkian social practice. Through defining the facets of practice, I set out the conceptual underpinning for comprehending rural space as produced through social practice. Moreover, this is far from tangential discussion, since I illustrate how practices are shaped by performances that entail material, imaginative and embodied dimensions, and provide empirical examples from where rural space reproductions manifest in practices the thesis engages with. Throughout this discussion I navigate amongst the key theorists that have been framing the thesis; specifically, Schatzki, Ingold and Merleau-Ponty. The outcome develops the thesis' own triad for producing rural space from the basis of Halfacree's (2006) triad, drawing on Shovian thinking of a practice as skill and competence, materiality and meaning (see, Shove and Panzar, 2005), as I set out in the conceptual framework. Consequently, discussion pivots across practice theory terms to consolidate the thesis' theoretical progression as culminating in presenting rural space as (re)produced through the performances of social practices.

Halfacree's triad of rural space (see, *Figure 2.1*) serves as an invaluable foundation from which rural space can be positioned as produced in subjective, situated (re)performances. In detailing his triad, Halfacree moves beyond dualistic thinking about the rural as either geographically, material rurality, or conceptually produced rurality, noting in the process how, 'the material and ideational rural spaces ... intersect in practice'

(Halfacree, 2006: 47). Before framing the argument for rural space as produced through the triad, Halfacree gestures at thinking (rural) space as produced through practice.

But in *Read/Rework* I demonstrate how the triad can be developed. The triad contends production of rural is inherently production of rural space through a three-fold composition of ‘lives of the rural’, ‘representations of the rural’ and ‘rural locales’; each being open to theoretical development. The discussion there pushed at how each vertex of the triad could be (re)interpreted, by challenging how they can be rearticulated. The trajectory followed reworked the three-fold architecture from Halfacree’s basis, through the conceptual framings of performance theory, (landscape) phenomenological thought, Schatzkian Theories of Practice, material culture theories and latterly, the potential offered by mobilities research. The outcome was that rural space could be conceived as subjectively performative, in registers that attend to the phenomenological body. Moreover, rural space was theorised as socially produced and cohering through successive and enduring taskscapes (Ingold, 1993; 2001) of situated engagement; (re)producing rural space through the intersections that performing (particular) social practices enable. However, to further elucidate how rural space is produced through practice, it is useful to further unpack how practices, in a Schatzkian sense, are composed.

Social practices, according to Schatzki (1996; 2001; 2002), are the way in which all life socially coheres. To conceive of the everyday as *practiced* is a social ontology: subjects are understood to be negotiating multiple embodied dimensions of performance in the mundane articulation of a myriad of practices. Practices of cooking, walking, driving, provisioning food and do-it-yourself home improvements are all examples of practices that can enmesh in social lives (see, Shove and Panzar, 2005; Watson and Shove, 2008; Shove *et al*, 2012). Moreover, practices form the ways in which social life is understood and through which experience of space is organised. Practices exist across times and spaces and are only made present in the situated, contingent performances that the subjective scale endures. Thus the performances of social life can be understood to cohere as practices. Enduring and repeated performances, according to Schatzkian practice ontologies, are constitutive of social practices, such that ‘*practices are open, temporally unfolding nexuses of actions*’ (Schatzki, 2002: 72).

In the context of rural space, this notion of practice, as temporally resonant and performatively multifarious, holds much critical resonance. In empirical discussion of negotiations of rural space, it emerges how rurality endures through the mundane performances of driving as a practice. Thus, the actions of driving can be understood as integral to the actions that compose producing rural space. But these actions only belong to productions of rural space in contingent and subjective registers that (re)produce rurality through driving practice. This makes identifying the dimensions of what rural space entails

difficult to distinguish since it is embedded within the myriad *practising* of social life. However, what makes rural space tangible as produced through practice is discernible through disentangling what Schatzki means by a practice *per se*. Through unpacking the composition of practice, the conceptual space to illustrate how rural space can be made in practice is opened up.

For Schatzki, social practices are composed of ‘bodily doings and sayings’ (Schatzki, 2002: 72); the embodied dimension of practice is foundational to the ontology. However, there are several dimensions that comprise a practice in Schatzkian sense:

‘the doings and sayings that compose a given practice are linked through (1) practical understandings, (2) rules, (3) teleoaffective structure, and (4) general understandings. Together, the understandings, rules, and teleoaffective structure that link the doings and sayings of a practice form its organisation” (Schatzki, 2002: 77).

In order to establish how rural space emerges, it is imperative to draw out how the production of rural space can subjectively manifest through these dimensions. Although these are dimensions of a practice, and to reassert, the thesis is not arguing for rural space as a social practice *per se*, it is through paying attention to the intricacy of practice ontologies that the thesis can establish how rural space should be conceived as produced in and through social practices.

Firstly, ‘practical understandings’ are the ways in which practices are tacitly understood (rather than conceptually rendered). A practice, for Schatzki is bound by the ways in which bodies articulate their embodied engagement with the social world, such that the haptic registers of performing a given practice are comprehensible as integral to that practice enduring in subjective experience. In producing rural space, there are myriad and multiple instances of tacit, embodied registers being negotiated in the practical understandings of driving, animating the enaction of practice in subjective and situated dimensions. Rural space is a performative negotiation within driving practice that shapes the way it practically manifests. And, conversely, driving practices produce situated, materially nuanced and imaginatively problematic (in some data) reproductions of rural space. For example, one explicit (and empirically resonant) instance is presented in the *Road* chapter, where the production of rural space emerges as tacit through how the road *surface* is endured. Rural space is performed through the driver-car-road relationality that is physically manifest in the driver’s bodily engagement with space, such that roads can engender production of rurality. Thus practical understandings in and of other social practices engender the production of rural space because performances of rural space shape how the practical understandings subjectively manifest.

‘Rules’ govern the way practices socially cohere (Schatzki, 2002). For Schatzki, rules are the shared connections between subjectivities (Schatzki, 2002); the ways in which

practice collectively coheres across situated tasksapes (Ingold, 1993; 2001). Arguably rural space emerges through how (driving) practices are shaped by notions of discursive ruralities. Discourses of ‘the rural’ shape multiple ‘doings and sayings’ of (driving) practices, as is shown through the thesis’ data. Key examples, where driving practices produce rural space through subjective (re)performances include: riding over potholes as an experience, not an endurance (*Road*); the engagement with seasons as celebrated and instrumental in subjective routes (*Rhythm*); rendering what is visible through what can be visualised in the practice of rural space (*Re/View*); and, that rural space is somehow ‘out there’ requiring an embodied rendering of materialities to accommodate its production (*Ride*). Discourses of ‘the rural’ are the social medium that emerge as the institutions, arguably, that repeatedly form the ‘rules’ of rural driving practice, and subsequently through which rural space endures. That is not to deny that other dimensions may shape the rules of driving practices (for example, Edensor’s (2007) suggestion of the import national scales have in determining the socio-cultural landscape road use), but through the thesis, the recurrent organising principle is repeatedly notions of discursive rurality.

Similarly shaping practice are the ‘teleoaffective structures’. When Schatzki refers to this dimension of a social practice he is gesturing not at the rules that govern between subjective articulations of practice, rather at how a practice is itself emotionally and normatively shaped (Schatzki, 2002). Thus, ‘teleoaffective structures are recurring and evolving effects of what actors do together’ (Schatzki, 2002:81); in short they result from the endurance of practices over time and space, internally shaping the practice.

Teleoaffectivities, for Schatzki, are a means to capture the normative embeddedness that practices embody, but are distinct from the subjects which may perform a practice. The thesis illustrates how in evoking rural space, the teleoaffectivities of practice are nuanced. One teleoaffectivity of rural driving might be understood as the deference given to Sunday temporalities. Sundays are experienced and manifest as distinctive times and spaces embedded through performances of this weekly rhythm in practices, including those of producing rural space. Thus the teleoaffectivity is the weekly rhythm as it is performatively negotiated in enduring driving practices that produce rural space.

The vaguest facet of social practice that Schatzki presents is the notion of ‘general understandings’ (Schatzki, 2002). This can best be understood as the broader context through which practices are situated that shape the way a social practice may be composed. What this reminds is how practices are inherently bound to a geographical contingency and temporality, insofar as the societal context that a practice is borne from is integral to shaping how that practice manifests. In arguing for rural space to be conceived as socially practised, the concept of ‘general understandings’ demands acknowledging the broader context through which this rendering of rural space as produced through social practice is emergent

from. In part, much of this work is done in *Realising the Research*, since the production of rural space explored in the thesis is concerned with a very British orientated contextual backdrop. But equally how rural space is produced in the data illustrates a broader, cultural normativity to expressing relationality to rural space. A key example of this can be understood in the similar expressions and languages adopted across the data to denote rural space and convey its production in practice. Thus, ‘general understandings’ manifest as they can be identified in the enacting of practice. I contend that rural space as a practice can be conceived as having tangible ‘general understandings’ that resonate from the discursive ruralities that shape broader, cultural norms of British countryside spaces as having the potential to be rural.

Still, although the dimensions of a social practice can be unpacked in understanding performances entangled in producing rural space, the social realm is much messier in intersubjective practice performances than working through these four facets of a social practice may imply. It is imperative to recognise this messiness in the way practices cohere socially; a key reflection articulated in Schatzki’s writing on of how practices enmesh. In defining practice, Schatzki suggests that all actions in social life belong to practices, but emphasises the social sphere must be fluidly comprehended:

‘It is important to emphasise that the organisation of a practice describes a practice’s frontiers: A doing or saying belongs to a given practice if it expresses components of that practice’s organisation. This delimitation of boundaries entails that practices can overlap’ (Schatzki, 2002: 87).

What I take from this is key to progressing the understanding for how the rural is performed within practice. Schatzki suggests that for performances to be identified as belonging to a practice, the boundaries of what that practice socially entails must be understood. So by extension, for rural space to be conceived as produced through practice necessitates a conceptual grasp of what any given practice might be – since the performances of ‘doings and sayings’ that compose it may not belong solely to the practice.

That driving is subjectively understood as a practice (see Shove *et al*, 2012) has served as a critical empirical lens, since it has enabled participants to delineate boundaries in what their rural driving practice entails. In turn, this approach opened up space to articulate how the ‘doings and sayings’ of driving practice were nuanced when engagement with rural space was performed. Practitioners were able to easily demarcate the performances they enacted as belonging to driving from those that were nuancing the engagement by (re)producing rural space in practice. But, this illustrates how there is a cultural embeddedness of what rurality manifests as that is imperative to the recognition (and therefore *reproduction* of) rural space through social practices. It is a somewhat chicken and egg scenario, though less clearly defined: without cultural normativity around what

engenders rural space, its performance in practice is problematic, but equally it endures through (re)performances. In short, to manifest through practice, rural space relies on practitioners performing engagement with rural space with an awareness of what (they subjectively) conceive rurality to be, and how that shapes (and is shaped by) social practices. Without that, actions (such as driving) can belong to a multitude of other practices. Furthermore, without the ‘teleoaffectivity’, the ‘general understandings’ (Schatzki, 2002), or in a Shovian sense, ‘meanings’ (Shove and Panzar, 2005) that normatively bind a practice, rural space’s nuancing of performances that belong to various practices could not be conceived.

By extension, therefore, rural space becomes *practised* through it having a set of meanings that are (re)performed through situated engagements with social practices; know what rural space can manifest as shapes driving, whilst driving shapes the meaning of the rural space being produced. For rural space, Halfacree’s (2006) positions the representational as a pivotal vertex, however my development of this in the conceptual framework expands on the representational, to suggest the importance of thinking this dimension holistically as ‘the rural’ dominant discourse that is culturally normative in the British context (see, Cloke, 2003*b*). Here I want to extend this point to propose that without ‘the rural’ forming a conceptual, discursively-informed architecture, rural space would not emerge, endure and be reinforced through the performance of social practices. It is this reflection on the import of practice organisation through the discursive that underpins the thesis’ triad presented below and the subsequent reflections on its enaction and empowerment.

So thus far I have sought to demonstrate how in-depth reflection on Schatzkian social practices illuminates how and where (re)productions of rural space emerge through and in the performance of practices that engage with rural space. What is key is how rural space is ultimately positioned as processual, (re)produced in the interactions of practised social lives. Through successive (re)production, rural space can furthermore be understood as *practised*, since it manifests through myriad performances that form social practices *per se*. But to reach this recognition, I argue that the dimensions of practice, or ‘meaning’ in a Shovian sense, necessitate knowing what rural is *per se* in order to produce rural space. Therefore, in the latter discussion the focus has been to suggest how a conceptual rendering of rural space as shaped by dominant discourses of the rural (as empirically demonstrated in the thesis’ earlier chapters) endures through practices. Conclusively, (re)performances of rural space can emerge through practices because ‘the rural’ endures as a foundational concept for rural space, such that it nuances situated performances of social practices – seen throughout the thesis in the ‘rural driving practice’ that emerges.

8.3.1 The Thesis Triad

Before I attend to unravelling my contention for the integral import of ‘the rural’, I present and explore the thesis conclusion illustrated in a triad (see, *Figure 8.1*). In the thesis triad, each vertex emerges from the conceptual rendering set out in Read/Reworked, and is underpinned by the empirical discussion through the thesis. In order to fully articulate the importance of each aspect of this triad, I will discuss each in turn below. However, it is useful to firstly note the intention for diagrammatically representing the thesis. The purpose of the thesis triad is to convey the conceptual development that has taken place across the progression of the thesis. It is a triad that has developed from Halfacree (2006), which forms the basis of the conceptual framework (see, *Figure 2.1*), that is then rendered through a Shovian practice perspective (see, Shove *et al*, 2012) of meaning, materiality and competence. Whereas a practice would be conceived as produced through material, meaning and embodied skills (*ibid.*), rural space is positioned as processual in and amongst those fixings of a practice *per se*. Hence the triad sets out the (re)production of rural space as in flux, in and between the doing of three dimensions: *materialising*, *embodying* and *envisaging*. Thus the thesis triad, in the first instance, illustrates how rural space is emergent from performances that relationally negotiate the three dimensions at each vertex. As I further discuss below, however, positioning the production of space as subjectively composed through taskscape (Ingold 1993; 2001) serves to emphasise the import of processual, situated and fluidity in the negotiation of each vertex and the tensions between and amongst them. The contingency with which each vertex can be engaged is provided through use of the verb for each dimension: avoiding defining an entity at each vertex mitigates being reductive, and definitive, in the role that each dimension has in practice by capturing the inherent enaction taking place in performance. This approach also composes the triad as not just produced through performance of each dimension discretely, but that

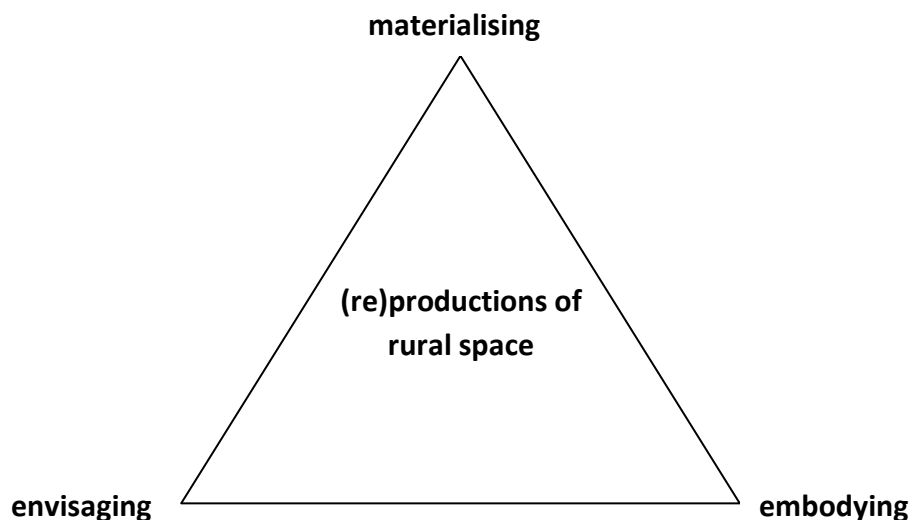


Figure 8.1: Thesis Triad

rural space is practised through each vertex interacting, as I shall further explicate below. In definition, *materialising* is how materialities are embedded in subjective performances; *embodying* illustrates the integral phenomenological body through which performances that practice rural space are negotiated; and, *envisaging* is the geographical imaginaries that are bound up in subjective performance, shaping (re)productions of rural space in practice. I will now detail each dimension in order to further establish the purchase of the thesis triad, before situating it in the context of Ingold's (1993; 2001) taskscape.

Materialising is the import of the material dimension in the production of rural space. That materialising is processual captures the subjectivity with which individuals embed numerous materialities into the production of rural space. The thesis has used the car as an empirical lens into how rural space performatively manifests, but in doing so has found how there are many materialities that shape various practices which are entangled in taskscapes of rural engagement. Cars, notably, are key relational negotiations, with all of their myriad material nuances, but also the road space and its transient material composition, the body and bodies of those actually and anticipated in the production of rural space, as well as space conceived as materially rural too. This extends the material that Halfacree's (2006) triad presents by opening up the scope of what is materially integral to rural space. In summary, framing through *materialising* emphasises the relationality, provisionality and situatedness with which the material is enduringly embedded in (re)performances of rural space.

Embodying emerges from positioning all engagements with the worlds as being performatively articulated through a phenomenological body. This vertex has progressed considerably from Halfacree (2006) noting of the 'lives in the rural', to reframe the subjective position as always from an embodied and therefore situated perspective. From the thesis' conceptual outset, there has been in-depth attention afforded to the subjective scale (methodologically and analytically) to unpack how the body endures performing rural space. How this emerges has been successively drawn out over the duration of the thesis such that the embodiment of rural space in practice emerges as comprehensible, tangible and imperative to the (re)production of rural engagement. *Embodying* reinforces the interconnections between each vertex, since it reminds how to produce rural space, the performative body is already being material and conceiving rural space as producible from its embodied subject position. Moreover, embodying emerges from recognition that everyday engagements with the world can be theoretically unpacked through Ingold's (1993; 2001) taskscape concept – which I discuss in more depth below.

Envisaging is the foundational vertex that provides the imaginative geographies of 'the rural' to the moments in which the subject (re)produces rural space. Informed by the discursive rural, however, envisaging is suggested to convey the pivotal role that pre-

conceived notions of rurality have in the production of rural space. Envisaging is characterised by articulation and animation in practice of the discursive ‘rural’ that rural studies has been preoccupied with for decades. Performing rural space through the taskscape opens up conceptual space for questioning how the perception of rurality is (subjectively) composed in practices, such that rural space is produced. Because the production of rural space is therefore situated, and subjectively engages each vertex in performance, by extension, I would argue that the subjective scale is where empowering of one dimension over another can be exercised. To inform this contention, I again draw on Foucault’s (1977) philosophy on the role of power in and on everyday interactions that individuals have with the world. Following a Foucauldian notion, I contend that the subjective production of rural space is engendered through the tensions in practice of the three vertices, such that they can be unevenly empowered to each exert more resonance in situated (re)performances across varied temporalities. This is empirically evidenced across the thesis in the successive discussions that bring the integral empowerment of discursive notions of ‘the rural’ in the performance of social practices. The envisaging that shapes rural space should therefore be understood as varying in extent, as practiced performances have illustrated how the extent to which ‘the rural’ shapes (re)production of rural space is contingent and conditional on the situated context.

At the close of the ride chapter, I illustrate how discursive notions of ‘the rural’ are actively envisaged and empowered in subjective taskscapes of rural space such that an ontology of an objective rural space endures. Thinking this through the triad’s performance as a taskscape that produces rural space, I want to extend reflection on this finding, since to conclude how this can be conceptualised enables the triad’s purchase to be further emphasised. In the chapter summary above I describe how the car/body/road negotiation in practice endures even when individuals articulate an anterior rural space; since to objectify rurality they must do so from *somewhere*, to follow Merleau-Ponty (1967). Thus, I would argue that conceptualising the triad as variously and unevenly empowered illustrates how, for these participants’ performances that are conveyed as externalising and objectifying rural space, are simply empowering the *envisaging* vertex over and above their recognition of the materialising and embodying they’re enacting to perform (objectifying) rural space. That rural space can be conceived as an anterior, objective ‘rural’ reality that is suspended and distinct from the bodies and materialities that occupy the subjective positions which perform such a production, is an effect of empowering enduring discursive notions of rurality. Furthermore, performances that allude to such untenable ontologies serve to reinforce the discursive through practice.

Thus, understanding how rural space is produced needs to holistically recognise how the triad’s relational (re)production through practice manifests. The chapters that have

composed this thesis sit variously across the triad, since they each address varying extents of each dimension. Whilst all chapters engage with the three dimensions, each offers nuanced framings that illuminate the inherent tensions amongst the vertices. In *Road*, the focus is on materialising and embodying as it is shaped by envisaging. In *Rhythm*, however, the foregrounding of the taskscape as the medium for temporalities to unfold brought the tension between envisaging and embodying into focus. During *Re/View*, there is a journey through the key dimensions, where embodying is emphasised as integral to visibilities and visualising, but in relation to materialising, though I progress onto describing envisioning, which is critically drawing out tensions between embodying and envisaging. I find Cresswell's (2010) suggestion for the importance of 'frictions' in mobilities as illustrative of performative politics as potent for thinking about how these tensions manifest. Finally, and for example, in *Ride*, the focus is unpacking the performative frictions between embodying and materialising, but this draws out emergent themes on how rural space is shaped by envisaging discursive ruralities in situated performances.

Consequently, it is far from tangential to suggest that *envisaging* provides a context through which to appreciate how 'the rural' – as a vein of well-established discourse – endures in and through practice. Just as the triad serves to reproduce rural space, it equally is an architecture of performance that (can subjectively) reinforce 'the rural' as a discourse on British countryside spaces. The performativity – drawing on Gregson and Rose (2000) – of rural space through the triad is inevitably iterative, whereby performances can reproduce normative, dominant discourses with what rural spaces come to be understood as. What this means is that the performances explored throughout this thesis are inescapably embedded in producing that rural discourse, as much as they are of being informed and shaped by that rural discourse. Reemphasising the all-encompassing pastiche of rural space that culturally circulates in the UK reinforces why the focus on the subjective has been key to drawing these conclusions. Unpacking what it is that people do, and why, has demonstrated linkages from the subjective scale through to the social of practice such that the triad can be understood as fully integrated and empirically realised.

Underpinning all of this argument for the (re)performance of rural space through the triad is the conceptual depth of Ingold's taskscape (1993; 2001). Therefore, it is imperative here in the conclusion to fully appreciate and situate the role taskscape has played in the development of the thesis triad, and ultimately the thesis too. Working with taskscape has provided much traction for the intricate analysis at the embodied scale – particularly around the body/car relationship and the sense of temporality. Ingold enables sustained attention to the body as it produces its rural taskscape. There are two interrelated points to draw out that have been pivotal in the purchase the taskscape framing has offered on how rural space can be understood. Firstly, taskscape enables conceiving temporalities as integral to the

performance of rural space; a key concern explored in *Rhythm* earlier. Secondly, the taskscape emphasises the phenomenological scale through which bodily experience (and thus rural space) is composed. By setting the body up as a phenomenological entity, Merleau-Ponty's positioning of the subject illuminates how producing rural space is intangible in anything other than (embodied) practice:

“In visual experience, which pushes objectification further than does tactile experience, we can, at least at first sight, flatter ourselves that we constitute the world, because it presents us with a spectacle spread out before us at a distance, and gives us the illusion of being immediately present everywhere and being situated nowhere. Tactile experience, on the other hand, adheres to the surface of our body; we cannot unfold it before use, and it never quite becomes an object” (Merleau-Ponty, 1958: 369).

Thus the rural cannot ever be an object because it is always produced through the subject. It is a tactile encounter because rural space is produced through tactile registers – potholed roads, for example – such that we cannot articulate what it is exactly until it is being made in lived experience. Where rural space manifests is a subjective, *tactile*, experiential encounter with the world. Rurality can be produced in spaces disconnected from geographically rural spaces *per se*, but its production is always bound to the embodied subject. Therefore, what Merleau-Ponty offers here is further purchase for arguing that spatial experience is (inter)subjectively produced through the body's engagement with the world.

I recognise the implication of making this argument for the rural, as potentially having far-reaching resonances. However, I am keen to exercise caution. Emplacing the body in the production of rurality quashes and replaces the renderings of rural space as representatively (re)produced, since it foregrounds the import of the performative. But it is imperative to emphasise the import of social practices that cohere subjective performances together. This enables the thesis to avoid charges of over-individualising rural space, since it suggests embedding the phenomenological as *practised*. And, so, to go full circle:

‘practices, as I have described them, are social phenomena. This is because, first, participating in them entails immersion in the extensive tissue of coexistence that embraces varying sets of people. A participant in a practice coexists not just with those whom she interacts, but also eo ipso with various sets of other participants, including the collection of all participants’ (Schatzki, 2002: 87).

Through his emphasis on the enmeshing of intersubjectivities, Schatzki illustrates how the (re)productions of rural space that endure through social practices are conceivable as performances that are embedded in a practice ontology of social life. Therefore, rural space is positioned as (re)produced through the thesis triad, where performances subjectively empower the three dimensions of rural space in situated, relational negotiations of everyday social practices.

8.4. Reflecting Back on the Car as an Empirical Lens

It has already been established that driving can be understood as a social practice (Birtchell, 2012; Watson, 2012; Shove *et al*, 2012), so, in the first instance, using the car as an empirical lens in this research context illustrates the interconnectivity of practices in the social world. But, as also highlighted initially, the car for some is deeply problematic in the practice of rural space, such that its materiality ontologically nuances the way in which rural space is positioned (though I refute and negate this contention above). To address some of this challenge, this section of summation offers critical reflection on the role of the car in the thesis that has been produced.

Broadly, the car has provided a material context through which to focus empirical attention on the performance of rural space. Without an additional material lens, the material dimension would have remained as being rural space *per se*. However, the endeavour of the triad is to demonstrate the partiality, contingency and subjectivity with which rural space is produced. To have been reliant on unpacking the performances of rurality through the (subjectively defined) materiality of rural space would not have given the research enough tangible material leverage to engage participants in conversation.

That cars have been, in recent decades particularly, the object of renewed critical attention provided the conceptualisation of their use in rural driving with a plethora of notions from which to select. Most notably, the work of Dant (2005) has been pivotal in the development of the thesis, providing the ‘driver-car’ notion, from which the argument for the driver-car-road- has been propagated. But Urry and Sheller’s key explorations (Sheller and Urry, 2000; Urry and Sheller, 2000) of the mobilities paradigm have also been instrumental in unpacking the data, amongst other mobilities scholars referenced earlier.

Moreover, in working *with* cars as an empirical lens, this presented the challenge (and opportunity) to work *within* cars. Again, the recently published mobilities literature provided a starting point for how car spaces could be methodologically engaged with (see, Laurier *et al*, 2008), that has also developed in the undertaking of data collection and analysis. Whilst critical reflection on the methodology was summed in the *Rudiments and Routines* chapter earlier, it is worthy of note here how the approach taken enables the thesis to contribute to an emergent literature on video methods in geographical research too.

Much is learned across this thesis about the relationality individuals have with automobility in non-urban spaces that can contribute to the automobilities field, and more broadly. Notably, in an urban-centric literature, this research provides much depth to enriching understandings of how the car is socially and culturally embedded in situated practices of spatial engagement and production. The import of rural space in the negotiation of the driver-car-road engenders nuanced performances of driving practice on several notable fronts too; including, accommodating roads as holistically understood spaces.

Yet also learned is how fragile the formation of driving practices are, and how spatially contingent their performance can be. Rural space is articulated and dependent on being produced in driving practice, itself subsequently attuned through the performance of rural space. To echo the discussion above, the interrelations in the social sphere are tangible in practice. So following on from Schatzki, the integration and embeddedness of practices can also be recognised as emergent from ‘nexuses’ of practices; parenting, walking, fishing, eating and sight-seeing, all interconnected practices with driving practices through (re)productions of rural space.

Empirically, by unpacking driving practices in specific (subjectively defined) spatial contexts, this thesis highlights how the automobilities literature can benefit from using the car as a critical lens onto other practices. Without making too-grand a claim, the thesis reconfigures where automobilities can direct its focus, since I illustrate through the rich data how it is useful to push beyond urban boundaries of practice. In theorising the driving moment as an enduring performance, a taskscape of social practice, the conceptual door has been opened to continue to develop the phenomenological body as it navigates through space automated by a car.

Finally, the car opens up how the thesis’ findings can be more broadly applied. As I set out in the opening chapter, by exploring the way in which the car is socially and culturally embedded in practices of rural engagement, the research delivers an in-depth insight into the value that driving engenders for everyday encounters that (re)produce rural space in practice. Consequently, by adopting the car, the thesis offers a basis for critical reflection on public policy that is widely shaped by protectionist ideologies. The Peak District National Park, through the thesis, are presented with empirical evidence of how embedded, valued and integral the car is to producing rural space for everyday engagement by both residents and non-residents. Attitudes and values about car use across this research area are better understood through the thesis, such that the findings captured within it potentially has much applicable purchase to produce robust policy reforms. Crucially, the challenge presented by the thesis’ use of the car is to think more pragmatically about what dimensions of driving and car use individuals embed in their (re)productions of rurality, and the subsequent ways in which these can be negotiated in policy development.

8.5 Destination: (Re)producing Rural Space

And so the thesis journey concludes. Over the lifespan of the thesis, and equally captured within this chapter, has been a sense of shifting geographic scales (the subjective, the social) that offer fertile interconnected framings for understanding how rural space manifests performatively. What has been offered in this conclusion is the culmination of conceptual

development across the thesis, which has ultimately suggested that rural space is processual, subjective and (re)performed in and through social practices.

Before I progress to concluding the contribution being made, it is useful to return to note how the thesis has delivered on each of the aims and objectives set out initially, to provide succinct closure to the discussion that has ensued. Principally, the thesis aimed to re-theorise how engagements with rural space are negotiated in situated practices, offering several interrelated objectives to guide how this aim was to be achieved. The first objective was to contribute to the rural studies literature by offering a nuanced conceptual framework for theorising the rural and put this empirically to task across the thesis. This is achieved through the thesis trajectory: in the Read/Reworked chapter, where Halfacree's (2006) triad is introduced and developed the conceptual framework is set up, then worked with through in the thesis analytical discussion, culminating in proposing the thesis' triad, presented above. Moreover, and significantly for the second objective, to explore Schatzkian Theories of Practice rendered through Merleau-Pontean (1958) phenomenology, the expediency of the conceptual framework is reinforced through the empirical discussion. However, in aiming to re-theorise engagements with rural space, the thesis adopts the car as empirical context and fulfils the third objective to contribute to the automobilities literature and expand the scope of further rural research. In exploring the driver-car-road relationality, the thesis has generated findings around car-use and rural engagement that contribute to these previously disconnected fields. Through the principal aim, and these primary objectives, the thesis accomplishes a multitude of key contributions to theorising engagements with the rural, not least in illustrating the empirical and conceptual purchase in researching ruralities using materialities unexpected for a rural research agenda. Additionally, the secondary aim of the thesis was to explore technological innovation in a qualitative methodological approach. As illustrated across the thesis, in following the objective to utilise video methods, the generation of video data has been imperative to the findings that have been presented. In short, having these primary and secondary aims has driven the thesis development to the compelling contribution it makes.

I am keen to reiterate what is at stake for making this claim about rural space, echoing the key conclusion from the culmination of empirical and theoretical progression made above. In arguing that rurality should be conceived as rural space, drawing on Halfacree (2006), but as practised fundamentally shifts the way in which the rural can be understood. If thinking about the 'rural' as produced through new channels of engaging with its production (theorising 'rural' a subjectively and contingently reproduced) then there inevitably emerges findings from adopting this approach that contribute to furthering scholarship on 'rural' geographies. The opportunity in conceiving it as subjectively performative, cohering socially in practice, is that the rural becomes animate. The dominant

cultural norms it is reinforced by are found to be made in situated, contingent performances of engaging to produce rural space. Thus rurality has the potential to manifest embedded in manifold social practices. This opens the door to the myriad of (material) framings that could be used to further unravel how engagements with rural space practice its production in situated and subjective geographies; and the way in which these socially coalesce.

Moreover, by focusing on mobilities, this emplaces rurality in an inherently mobile framing. The risk of statically rendering rural space has arguably been somewhat mitigated through the selection of a material lens that offers subjective automobility. However, again, this research agenda establishes how thinking rurality as more-than settled, spatially and theoretically, emphasises the value to be gained in *mobilising* a rural research endeavour. By empirically challenging the research to grapple with how a fluid notion is contingently made and remade through the subjective scale has led the thesis to open up much critical space from conceptualising movement in practice.

But whilst the thesis opens up conceptual space, I am critically aware how many gaps it does not populate through its course. Over the course of the thesis there has been a conscious attempt to critically engage with the contribution that is being made. However, this self consciousness may not always explicitly manifest, but rather it is written through the articulation of the thesis. I endeavoured, where applicable in the discussion, to cite my role in shaping the emergent themes the thesis presents. For example, in the rhythm chapter I bring to the fore the difficulty in working with video methods and analytically engaging with the data they generate.

Furthermore, there is no escaping the key distinction and assumption the thesis starts from – that is that rural space exists – and that arguably this shapes all of the ensuing conclusions. I take this, however, from the recognition that prevails in the rural studies literature, which itself is addressing the cultural normativity of setting British countryside spaces up as rural space. Still, I acknowledge the effect of setting ‘rural’ up to be empirically explored inevitably leads to an objectification of rural space in order to locate the research agenda. In being concerned with the performance and production of rural in subjective practice, this necessitates adopting a communicable notion of what rural is. I do not however consider that this is an issue for the findings generated. Rather, in highlighting this (inevitable) shaping of the research by setting out in the first instance to explore ‘rural’, this serves to underline how inherently partial the findings are. Moreover, the thesis does not purport to make generalisations. By beginning with a notion of rurality, and offering findings on how subjective renderings of rural space manifest in practice, the thesis wholly engages in conceiving rural space post-structurally; as produced, situated and subjectively shaped by individuals’ intrinsic partialities.

Rural space is therefore not a fixed entity, rather it is a situated social and cultural production that manifests in a myriad of subjective times and spaces. The purpose of the thesis triad is to emphasise the interconnectivity between materialities, discourse and embodiment in the performance of rural space such that they are never fixed, always relational and emergent from the subjective taskscape scale. This means that rural space is conceptualised as simultaneously heterogeneous whilst bound by its social and cultural normativity through the social practices that (re)produce it. Furthermore, the triad is enacted through conceiving the subjective scale of taskscape production, a concept that embeds the intricacies of temporality into the practising of rural space. Thus, rural space has manifold timespaces (Schatzki, 2010) that cohere through the triad's situated (re)production. Relationality, adopting Blackman and Venn's (2010) notion of co-emergence underpins how rural space is borne out of the performance of practices, but as noted above, tensions, or 'frictions' as Cresswell (2010) animate how mobilities conceptually and performatively manifest in (re)producing rural space too. What is more, I find that in thinking the triad through the concept of power, much can be gained in critically disentangling how for some, the rendering of rural space is ontologically problematic in relation to the car can conceptually manifest. As I note above, how subjective empowering of the thesis triad's dimensions illustrates how objectification of 'the rural' endures in practice. The understanding generated is, therefore, that, however produced, the subject can *envisage* the import of 'the rural' contingently.

Ultimately, the thesis works hard to establish rural space as produced in practice, but the way in which that practice is embedded in the social lives of the subjectivities it engages with begs the question, where does producing rurality fit in their broader social lives? What sort of position does rural space have in the everyday biographies of those who do not frequent geographically recognisable countryside spaces? For the man wearing his Barbour jacket to work in the City of London (Guardian, 2010), what rendering of rural space is being practiced in those performances? And, more vitally, what is at stake for the endurance of rural space, socially, culturally, but physically too, in positioning it as in flux? Where does that leave rurality? A pastiche? A colloquialism? A (cultural) memory? The thesis responds to such charges conclusively by giving deference to the subject who (re)performs rural space: that rural space is produced as inherently subjective registers, rendered through the body and, thus, although existentially naïve to label as such, rural space is both what it has always been, shaped by what the subject wants it to be, wherever they are.

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APPENDIX

- Research Participants
- Technical Postscript
- Research Information Leaflet Sample
- Research Information Sheet Sample
- Consent Form Sample

Participants

A short, biographical summary for each participant is provided below.

Will

Aged around thirty, a white male, Will was a married academic researcher, a competitive cyclist, resident in the suburbs of Nottinghamshire, he has no children and drives a Skoda estate car both commuting and recreationally.

Drew

Aged around sixty, a white male, Drew was a professional Highways design engineer living in a semi-rural area of Derbyshire. His children had grown up and left home. He had a four-wheel car drive that he used for commuting and recreation.

Anne

Aged around forty, a white female, Anne worked part-time in an administrative role for the county council, using her car for work business across her district area of Derbyshire. She was married and had three children, all living at home, though two older teenagers and one primary school age. Her parenting shaped her car usage, but she shared a car with her mother so did occasionally also use public transport.

Ed

Aged around fifty, a white male, Ed liked cars. His household, consisting of him and his wife, owned three cars at the time of the data collection. Ed's children had left home but he still had some parenting discourse that shaped his narrative. Professionally, Ed worked for the county council which gave him a drive through rural space as his everyday commute from his residence in a semi-rural area, though he often frequented the same roads recreationally.

Colin

Aged around sixty, a white male, Colin was keen to participate in the research to express his viewpoint on car use in the countryside. Colin lived in Sheffield and drove his car for work, travelling amongst urban sites, but also used it to access rural space.

Tina

Aged around sixty, a white female, Tina lived in Sheffield and, as she was retired, but also because she didn't drive, she relied on public transport. However, she was often passengering with her son to rural areas from Sheffield, providing her with car-countryside experience.

Derek

Aged around sixty, a white male, Derek had lived in Sheffield all his life. He was passionate about cars, having owned 4x4s and, at the time of the research, he drove Toyota Prius. He was retired from working in the steelworks meaning he used his car in the countryside for participating in weekly walking groups and going fishing.

Liz

Aged around sixty, a white female, retired, Liz lived in Sheffield. She owned and drove her car to access rural space for access to the mid-week walking groups she regularly participated in.

Alice

Aged around sixty, Alice had a fiesta that she talked fondly about driving. She lived in Sheffield, and used her car to participate in group walks during week-days when she wasn't working, but also to take her elderly parents for a drive at the weekends.

Robert

Aged around seventy, white male, Robert hadn't always lived in Sheffield, having previously lived in other areas of the UK. He was retired, and passionate about not driving in the countryside at weekends. He previously drove a motorcycle, and used his car for camping in rural space, but in his later years, his recreational activities focused on painting and sketching in rural space, facilitated by his wife driving the car.

Lynne

Aged around sixty, white female, recently widowed, Lynne had lived in London all of her adult life but was from Sheffield. She had just moved back to the area to be closer to her elderly mother, and to entertain a more 'rural' engagement with life. Lynne lived in a commuter town, with a rural periphery readily accessible, just south of Sheffield. She was loquacious about her Nissan Note, a car she owned and drove regularly through rural space to reach her mother who was in the Peak District.

Nicky

Aged around forty-five, white female, Nicky was a professional arts (academic) practitioner, curator and entrepreneur who lived in a rural market town in the research area. Her car biography included having a series of 'hippy-ish' cars, but, at the time of the research, she was sharing a car with her husband. She drove regularly for work and recreation, meaning rural space was driven through in every direction, for all purposes of car use, given her country town location. Nicky had grown-up children and a dog.

Andrea

Aged around forty-five, white female, life-time resident of Sheffield city area, married to Bill (see below), Tina had a life-long love of cars and motoring. She met with a car enthusiast group weekly, but also was lead organiser for an annual car show held in the Peak District. Tina worked for the family business, whilst also caring for grandchildren. She primarily drove a new Fiat 500, but there were many other family cars available to her. Her driving in rural space was both recreational and work related.

Bill

Aged around fifty, white male, life-time resident of Sheffield city area, Bill was as passionate about driving as Tina his wife (see above). He owned several cars, but primarily drove a Peugeot 206 with a large diesel engine. Bill owned his own business, which took him over a wide area, occasionally driving a van, meaning he frequented rural space both on business and recreationally.

Daniel

Aged around forty, white male, living in a country town, Daniel, although he could, didn't really like driving. He could walk to work in the local cycle shop. But he owned a Volkswagen camper van that he occasionally drove, however this was shared with his wife, Natalie (see below). Daniel was instead passionate about cycling.

Natalie

Aged around forty, white female, living in a country town but was working further afield (previously Sheffield, but recently had transferred to a local village school), Natalie was a primary school teacher who liked to cycle to school since work got closer to home. She, like her husband Daniel (see above), was passionate about cycling, but also relished the mobility the campervan they jointly owned offered them as a family. Their children were teenagers.

Lisa

Aged around forty, white female, single, living in a country town but originally from Manchester, Lisa was not working but seemingly not needing to work. Lisa could drive, but hadn't owned a car for three years. She used to have a company car and drive for work purposes but when changed jobs had given it back, then not replaced it. She had also taken advance driving lessons along local rural lanes. But now she took the bus, walked or cycled. Lisa would hire cars if she needed to. In terms of rural driving, that was seldom locally, since she did not have a car, but she was often passengering with friends through rural spaces for recreation.

Rita

Aged around seventy, white female, married and retired resident of a rural hamlet in the Peak District, Rita was formerly a lecturer in Sheffield. Throughout her academic career she commuted into Sheffield from the Peaks via car. Her children were grown-up and had left home, though had been bought up in the rural village-located family home. Presently she used her car in rural space whenever she needed to travel further than she could walk, but she was also involved in the rural Community Car scheme, giving lifts to elderly rural residents who needed to access services.

Mark

Aged around twenty-five, white male, single, Mark was born in the Peak District and maintained a house there, but lived full-time in Sheffield. An academic researcher, Mark was passionate about driving through rural space, but also a cycling enthusiast. He had inherited his car from his mother.

Liam

Aged around thirty-five, white male, married with a young daughter, Liam lived and worked (in a commercial research enterprise) in Sheffield. He had not always lived in the area, having previously been in Birmingham but moved to Sheffield for the city and countryside lifestyle. Liam owned an estate car, to facilitate his role as parent, which he used recreationally to access rural space for family time on Saturday afternoons.

Catherine

Aged around forty-five, white female, Catherine lived in the Dark Peak and worked in the a 'middle management' role in Manchester, commuting via train. Catherine was from London

originally, but had transferred from London for work, relocating her family (she had two children) to the 'country'. When she left London she re-learned to drive as previously had not used her licence but felt she needed it in rural space. She owned a Prius that she shared with her husband, which they had bought for its green credentials. They had also owned a Landrover when they lived in Pakistan.

Eleanor

Aged around thirty, white female, a post-doctoral research scientist, Eleanor was married to Shaun (see below) together with who she had a young daughter. Living in a cottage in a rural hamlet, Eleanor had her own Ford Focus that she drove cross-country to work everyday in a market town the other side of the Peak District. Eleanor wasn't originally from the area, but her husband was.

Shaun

Aged around thirty, white male, a post-doctoral research scientist, Shaun was enthusiastic about driving. Married to Eleanor (see above), Shaun's household had three cars: his wife's Ford Focus; a Subaru four-wheel drive estate car; and, an old van that he used recreationally for his cycling hobby. Working in Nottingham, Shaun used the car to commute, meaning his rural driving was for both commuting and recreation. Through his hobby, he was familiar with many of the roads that surrounded his rural home.

Beth

Aged around thirty-five, white female, a professional land manager, Beth had the most remote residence from all of the participants – up an unmade farm track in a sheltered valley within the dark Peak. Beth had two young, nursery-age children whom she drove around in her four-wheel drive Skoda estate car. Married, her husband had a company car. Beth worked in Sheffield part-time and alongside parenting, meaning her rural driving was both commuting, recreation, provisioning and managing childcare, amongst many other purposes.

Ian

Aged seventy, white male, Ian was a senior specialist and scientific advisor for various national-level research committees and organisations on a part-time basis. Ian lived in the Peak District, having recently moved to the area from rural Oxfordshire where he (and his wife) had raised children, none of whom lived with them now. Ian had a four-wheel drive for reliability of automobility in winter conditions.

Mike

Aged around forty, white male, life-long Sheffield city resident, Mike worked in a support role for the university. He was married and had a young daughter. He owned a used Rover that he didn't feel fit him very well. He was passionate about rural space and driving to and through the countryside was recreational for Mike, both with his family and his local-league football team that he managed.

Aneka

Aged around twenty-five, white female, originally from Poland, Aneka lived in Sheffield with her boyfriend Neil (see below). Aneka worked as an academic researcher, walking or cycling to work. Although she could drive, she did not drive in the UK. Her car use was

either experience from back in Poland, or passengering with her partner recreationally driving through rural space.

Neil

Aged around twenty-five, white male, life-long Sheffield city resident, Neil had access to his Dad's car, who lived with him and his partner, Aneka (see above). Neil was enthusiastic about driving, but not so enthusiastic about the car he had to access to. He would drive recreationally only, as he also worked in Sheffield.

Tarek

Aged around fifty, asian male, Tarek was a healthcare professional and had lived in Sheffield for several decades. He was married with teenage children. His household had several cars, but he predominantly drove a large four-wheel drive SUV-type car. Tarek lived in the suburbs so he used his car to commute into the city, but then also used it in the evenings and weekends to access Sheffield's rural periphery for recreation.

Technical Postscript: Video Methods

This discussion briefly offers further technical detail regarding the deployment and analysis of the video methods used in the research. The notes below provide a technical overview of the equipment, framing and data handling that enabled generation of empirical video data. Also noted is the process adopted for giving video data back to participants.

The research adapted Laurier *et al*'s (2008) strategy of encasing a regular video camera (a Canon FS100) on the dashboard to record looking in at participants through a fish-eye lens. A second camera was used to record the view looking out from the car in the direction of travel. Due to the practicalities, and budget, I used an ATC2K camera to video looking out of the windscreen which I already had from previous research (Emeny, 2009). This camera was fixed to the inside of the windscreen on the driver's offside (so as unobtrusive as possible) using a Panavise Suction Mount. Participants received the videoing materials in a portable, lightweight box that concealed the video equipment (in case they wanted to store it in their car). The box contained information leaflets detailing how to work the cameras, how to set them up in their vehicles and health and safety guidelines to adhere to, which I discussed and demonstrated with the participants when they received the equipment.. I gave instructions because I was asking the participants to use a video camera in a way that was different from established practices with that materiality.

The initial step for video analysis was to make copies of the data, which I did onto two portable hard-drives that had been purchased for the purposes of the research. One hard drive was a static, powered, 500 Gigabyte storage space that I keep in a secure location with copies of all of the research data, including the video data, as a form of digital repository. The second hard drive is a portable usb-powered 250 Gigabyte storage capacity that I used for the everyday demands of the research analysis. The data was stored anonymously as the participant's number, although participants were made aware at the outset that the nature of video data means that they are inevitable identifiable. This dual-approach is designed to insure that the data remains accessible, usable and securely archived at least for the next five years following the completion of the research. Once the data was manipulated (as I describe later) I also created copies of the files on my own laptop (which is password protected) and each of the project hard drives. Once the video data was ready to be integrated into the analysis software the portable hard drive could be used to enable this, which was an ideal solution so that the analysis could progress independent of researcher location. Also, the video data initially caused some issues with processing as the file types were problematic for working within a windows Vista environment. However, after using some file processing techniques, and taking advice from Dr. Eric Laurier, I was able to use Windows Moviemaker with the files that the video data was already in.

In order to edit the data I used Windows Moviemaker because this is software that is readily available as part of the Windows Vista operating systems and could accommodate the video data files that I had collected. Also, as it is designed by Microsoft, my IT literacy in their other packages meant that I could intuitively use it, with only a short time needed to learn the features of the software. Windows Moviemaker enabled viewing the video in real-time, cutting the video files and the simple addition of title plates for each section. Windows movie maker also allowed me to export each video extract as a WMV file, which is a format that is suitable for playback on the standard Windows Media Player. I exported each extract in this format for maximum flexibility, ensuring that each file was accurately labelled with participant number, video number and extract number. These extracts were used for two distinct purposes. One, accessing the extracts I wanted to use for elicitation was made easy by having each extract available as a discrete file that would quickly load and play on

Windows Media Player. I wanted to avoid using software that might be unfamiliar to participants so as not to cause any confusion in the post-videoing interview and to ensure that it ran technically smoothly. The other purpose extracts were individually exported was so that a DVD collection of extracts could be given to each participant. This was largely an iterative process though, as the initial post-videoing interview relied on my use of extracts, rather than running a DVD version of the data. As I progressed with the video analysis I became more adept at using the software, and by critically reflecting on the way the first post-videoing interview played out I adapted the way that I presented the video data to participants by using a DVD format which was far more visually accessible.

Each participant received a copy of the whole data they produced, along with a copy of extracts edited out of it. Data was delivered back to participants on DVD, largely using a software programme to make an easily navigable DVD menu to locate each extract should participants wish to in the future.

Research Information Leaflet

Want to know more?

If you have any questions, if you would like to discuss the research further or if you are interested in taking part please do get in touch.

Project Researcher:
Rosie Emeny

Address:
**D5, Department of Geography,
The University of Sheffield
Winter Street,
Sheffield
S10 2TN**

Email:
r.emeny@sheffield.ac.uk

Office Telephone:
+44 (0)114 222 7973
Fax:
+44 (0)114 222 7907

For more information please also see
the project website:

www.cars-countryside.postgrad.shef.ac.uk

Research Outcomes

This research is for a PhD thesis to be submitted in September 2012.

The research findings will be also be presented in other ways, for example in public events and journal articles.

Ethics

This research has been ethically approved by The University of Sheffield Department of Geography's Ethical Review Procedure.

**This research is funded by the
Economic and Social Research Council.**



www.esrc.ac.uk



Cars and the Countryside



***This leaflet is to give you an
overview of this research project.***

Project Researcher: Rosie Emeny

Project Summary

This is a social research project that aims to explore how the attitudes and values we each have about British rural space relate to the way that we use our cars in the countryside.

Visits, tours and trips to the British countryside, as well as living there, are an important part of social and cultural life in the United Kingdom. People use their cars to travel around the countryside for many different reasons. For example you may use your car to drive in the countryside as part of your work, for leisure drives, to commute, or for tourist sightseeing.

By exploring the uses of the car in the countryside the project aims to develop understandings about how the car shapes the way that we experience the countryside.

Research into why and how people use rural areas is valuable for informing decisions on how we can best manage our countryside.



Participation

To explore the issues that this research focuses on, the project needs people to participate.

- Do you drive your car in the countryside?
- Are you interested in countryside issues?
- Do you like talking about your car?

The project is using focus groups (group interviews) to generate discussions about the project's themes. Focus groups would be led by the researcher and participants will be asked to discuss their experiences and opinions.

- Would you like to speak with other people in a focus group session?

Alternatively, another way to participate is to be interviewed individually. Please contact the researcher for more details.

Filming in cars

The research also intends to make films of participants' drives through the countryside and then discuss these in individual interviews with participants.

Participants will be given video-cameras (like the one pictured) to record their drives.





The film will then be used to explore memories of countryside experiences and how these are shaped by the car.

- Would you like to video your rural drives?

Research value

This social research project will provide detailed information about car use in the countryside which will contribute to understandings of how we use our cars, and the way that we use the countryside. The findings could also be used by rural policy makers.

Research Information Sheet Sample

| | |
|---|--|
| Research Information Sheet for Interviewees |  The University Of Sheffield. |
| Project Title: Cars and the Countryside |  |
| You have been invited to take part in this research. This information sheet is to inform you about the research. It is important that you understand the research intentions and what taking part will involve before deciding whether you would like to take part. Please read the information and discuss it with others if you like. Please feel free to ask any questions if anything is unclear or you are uncertain about any aspect of the research. Please take time to consider if you would like to take part. Thank you for reading this. | |
| Project Summary: | |
| The project explores how attitudes and values about British rural space shape the way that people use the countryside. The project has research questions that focus on how the car is used as a way to access and experience rural spaces. The project explores the relationship people have to their cars when they use them as part of their everyday lives in the British countryside too. The fieldwork for this research is to be carried out between September 2010 and September 2011. | |
| Research Methods: | |
| The research aims to speak to a cross-section of different people using focus group discussions and individual in-depth interviews. The research will be conducting approximately 25 interviews. The research also intends to make films of participants' drives through the countryside and the discuss these with participants. | |
| Why me? | |
| You have been asked to take part in this research because the researcher has identified that your experience may contribute to answering the research questions. | |
| Do I have to take part? | |
| Participating is entirely voluntary, you are not obliged to participate. Refusal to participate will not affect you in any way or involve any penalty or loss of benefits. You can withdraw from the research at any time. No reason for non-participation or withdrawal is required. | |
| What will happen if I agree to participate? | |
| Becoming a participant will mean that you agree to be interviewed by the researcher. This is not a formal interview and the questions will not require any prior planning on your part. The interview will hopefully take place in your home, however if an alternative location is preferable then this can be arranged. Interviews will last approximately one hour, and will be recorded using a dictaphone. The purpose of the interview is to explore your attitudes and values about using your car in the countryside. Conversation will be informal and relaxed. Questions will be open ended. Areas that you think are important can be discussed. You will be asked to sign a consent form to say that you agree to participate in the project. | |
| Page 1 of 2 | September 2010 (Adapted from guidance produced by The University of Sheffield.) |

Research Information Sheet for Interviewees

What is expected of me as a participant?

You are expected to answer honestly and take the research seriously.

Are there any risks or disadvantages to taking part in this research?

Taking part in the research creates no further risks and no foreseeable disadvantages.

Are there any advantages to taking part in this research?

Whilst no immediate advantages can be seen it is hoped that the wider contribution that the research makes to understanding how the countryside is used will further inform public policy on countryside development and management.

What do I do if I have a complaint?

Please discuss any issues directly with the researcher. Alternatively please contact the research supervisor. If you think your complaint has not been resolved please contact the University of Sheffield's Registrar and Secretary. Contact details are given at the end.

Confidentiality

The research will protect your personal identity and ensure that the any personal data given whilst participating in the research will be kept confidential. You will not be identified in the research or subsequent presentations/publications as you will be given a pseudonym. All data will be stored anonymously and securely.

Ethics

This research has been ethically approved by The University of Sheffield Department of Geography's Ethical Review Procedure.

Research Outcomes

This research is for a PhD thesis to be submitted in September 2012. The research findings will be also be presented in other ways, for example in public seminars and academic articles.

This information sheet is for you to keep. Thank you for reading this.

Contacts:


Principle Researcher Details: Rosie Emeny

| | | |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Address: Department of Geography The University of Sheffield Sheffield S10 2TN | Telephone: 07841 522089 | Email: r.emeny@sheffield.ac.uk |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|

Research Supervisor Details: Dr. Matt Watson

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|---|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Address: Department of Geography The University of Sheffield Sheffield S10 2TN | Telephone: 0114 222 7911 | Email: m.watson@sheffield.ac.uk |
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Research Consent Form Samples



The University
Of Sheffield.

Research Consent Form
for Focus Group Participants and Interviewees

Working Title of Research Project: *Cars and the Countryside*

Name of Researcher: *Rosie Emeny*

Participant Identification Number for this project: Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated September 2010 explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project. ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. ☐

To withdraw please contact Rosie Emeny:

| | | |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Address: Department of Geography The University of Sheffield Sheffield S10 2TN | Telephone: 07841 522089 | Email: r.emeny@sheffield.ac.uk |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|

3. I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials and I will not be identified or identifiable in the outputs that result from the research. ☐
4. I agree to take part in the above research project. ☐

| | | |
|--|------|-----------|
| Name of Participant (or legal representative) | Date | Signature |
| Name of person taking consent (if different from lead researcher) <i>To be signed and dated in presence of the participant</i> | Date | Signature |
| Lead Researcher <i>To be signed and dated in presence of the participant</i> | Date | Signature |

Copies:
Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, Research Information Sheet and any other written information provided to the participants. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be placed in the project's main record (e.g. a site file), which must be kept in a secure location.

September 2010
(Adapted from guidance produced by The University of Sheffield.)

**Research Consent Form
for Video-Making Participants**



Title of Research Project: *Cars and the Countryside*

Name of Researcher: *Rosie Emeny*

Participant Identification Number for this project:

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have received adequate training and guidance on how to use the video cameras within my car and I have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. ☐

To withdraw please contact Rosie Emeny:

| | | |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Address: Department of Geography The University of Sheffield Sheffield S10 2TN | Telephone: 07841 522089 | Email: r.emeny@sheffield.ac.uk |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|

3. I understand that the researcher will interview me about the videos I produce and that my interview responses will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research data, including the video-data, but that I may be identifiable in any visual data that I create. ☐
4. I understand that my agreement will be sought about which extracts of video the research can use prior to their display in any exhibitions, presentations, seminars and/or other forms of representation of the research project. ☐
5. I take part in the project at my own risk and understand that at no-time whilst driving my vehicle will I use, or attempt to use, the video-cameras' controls. ☐

Name of Participant
(or legal representative)

Date

Signature

Lead Researcher

Date

Signature

To be signed and dated in presence of the participant

Copies:

Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, Research Information Sheet and any other written information provided to the participants. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be placed in the project's main record (e.g. a site file), which must be kept in a secure location.

November 2010

(Adapted from guidance produced by The University of Sheffield.)

DVD
